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DOWNTOWN, PARK SLOPE & BAY RIDGE EDITIONS

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Bloomy to MTA: Fast track

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Mayor Bloomberg called for the creation of express subway service on the F line, one of the most crowded routes, as part of a larger campaign announcement calling for a multi-

"Now is the time to act," the third-term-seeking mayor said in a statement on Monday. The multi-pronged package borrowed many old ideas from mass transit advocates that could improve travel in Brooklyn, including:

- Subsidized ferry service in Williamsburg and Greenpoint.
- A car-pool lane on the inbound Gowanus Expressway.

• The possible return of trolleys to Red Hook and other underserved neighborhoods.

Physically, the mayor's F-line call could be enacted relatively simply by the state Metropolitan Transportation Authority because there's an unused track for a zipper ride through stations in Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens and Park Slope en route to Coney Island. Bloomberg also called for the extension of the V train, which terminates in Manhattan, to run on the F line out to Coney Island for a one-two punch that Brooklyn hasn't seen since Jim Gilliam and Pee Wee Reese were at the top of the World Series-winning Dodgers lineup in 1955.

Express trains could stop at currently an unused platform at Bergen Street beneath the existing one, but they would skip Carroll Street, Smith-Ninth Streets and Fourth Avenue before stopping again at Seventh Avenue in Park Slope. From there, they would bypass the Prospect Park and Fort Hamilton Parkway stations en route to Church Avenue in Kensington.

But implementing the straphanger-supported proposal for the Culver Line however is off-track until the



On the campaign trail on Monday, would-be third-term Mayor Bloomberg said he wants to create an express F train.



Give peace a chance

We know you're stressed out, even in peaceful, easy Brooklyn. So this week's GO Brooklyn section features our guide to finding some calm in a topsy-turvy borough. Here, Angela Arnold, an instructor at Bend and Bloom Yoga in Park Slope, leads by example by striking a pose in Grand Army Plaza.

Marty locks up election before it begins

By Jared Foretek
for The Brooklyn Paper

Borough President Markowitz locked up a third-term in a Manhattan board room on Tuesday afternoon as the Board of Elections kicked the Bep's Democratic challenger off the ballot.

The 10-member Elections commission unanimously ruled that political newcomer Eugene Myrick had not collected the required 4,000 signatures.

Myrick had handed in more than 10,000 John Hancock's, but the vast majority were ruled invalid because the signers were either not registered voters or did not live in Brooklyn (or both).

In the end, the commissioners credited him with just 2,637 valid signatures.

"There is nothing we can do to help you, sir," said Board of Elections President Frederic Uman. Myrick accepted the decision with resignation.

"It's off, people don't have



Would-be borough president Eugene Myrick (left) tries to make a point against Borough President Markowitz's election lawyer Marty Connor — but Connor won the day and Myrick was tossed off the ballot, leaving Markowitz with no Democratic challenger.

a choice," he said. "What kind of a democracy is that?"

Myrick reserved choice words for Markowitz's election lawyer, former state Sen. Marty Connor, who spent nearly three decades in Albany.

"If anyone knows how to get you off a ballot, it's him," Myrick said. "Here I am, a first-time candidate. I don't know the rules and I'm going up against a guy who wrote the rules."

Last week, Connor said he had leveled the challenge against Myrick solely to protect the "integrity" of the balloting process.

After the Tuesday ruling, Connor was matter-of-fact: "He didn't have enough signatures," he said.

Officially, Markowitz still has to wait re-election in the November general election, but he faces only token opposition from Republican Marc D'Ottavio.

Hey, political junkies: Get a fix on the Web

The Brooklyn Paper

Local political junkies finally have a place to call their own on the Web.

On Friday, the Community Newspaper Group will launch BoroPolitics.com, the Internet's only Web site devoted solely to politics, elections, issues and races in Brooklyn, The Bronx and Queens.

Of course, BoroPolitics.com includes coverage of this year's citywide races, but our exclusive articles, features, profiles and unmatched analysis of the local races in Brooklyn, Bronx and Queens neighborhoods is what will give local political junkies their daily fix.

It all starts on Friday. Only at BoroPolitics.com.



Easy being 'Greenest' Finally, a street worthy of the award!



Many things make Lincoln Road between Bedford and Rogers avenues in Prospect Lefferts Gardens one of the borough's most beautiful by-ways.

Credibility has finally been restored to the celebrated — but controversial — "Greenest Block in Brooklyn" contest.

After last year's debacle, in which the decidedly un-green Eighth Street between Eighth Avenue and Prospect Park West was chosen, judges from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden did the right thing this year and picked a bona-fide bucolic block: Lincoln Road between Bedford and Rogers avenues in Prospect Lefferts Gardens.

This year's winners had entered last year, so naturally they were pleased that the Botanic Garden had recognized their sore green thumbs.

"I'll admit, we visited last year's winner



See GREEN on page 11

Laika the pooch lost & found

Confession, via Paper, helps owner find napped dog

By Robert Voris
for The Brooklyn Paper

Laika, the geriatric Husky whose abduction late last month prompted an immediate and visceral response from cops, readers and even a dog-loving state assemblyman, is back home — and you can partly thank The Brooklyn Paper.

Last seen in grainy surveillance camera footage being taken away from a Fort Greene deli on July 24 by a man in a wheelchair, Laika was discovered by her owner Natalie Barratt around the time that the wheelchair-bound man confessed to



Laika's human siblings, Isabella and Luke Serrano (with Lightnings), were all frowns last week before their Husky was found!

the crime in the comments section of our online report last Friday. "I am very very sorry for my misunderstanding of the dog," the man, Giuseppe Leonardo, posted on our Web site, adding that he believed that the dog had been abandoned.

"A man told me that the dog had been outside for hours alone, so me and my wife, being loving pet owners, saw to take her in thinking she was left there alone because of her age and health."

But after reading the subsequent

See LAIKA on page 11



LORD OF THE FLIES: Marc Dennis eats bugs!

Bug appetit!

We eat worms and crickets

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

You've heard of a mealworm, but have you ever heard of a meal of worms?

If DUMBO dietary iconoclast Marc Dennis has his way, people will soon swarm to eat insects.

Where most people see the harbingers of disease, Brooklyn's leading entomologist (that's bug-eater to you and me) sees his next meal. He urges people to get beyond the "yuck factor" and chow down on bugs, because they're healthy and environmentally friendly — especially compared to staples like fatty beef and penally up poultry.

It's simply a matter of getting

across one of Western civilization's



greatest culinary boundaries.

"Insects today are what sushi was two decades ago," Dennis said. Unlike Kafka's famous novella, there will not be an overnight metamorphosis with eating habits. Dennis, his wife and a small hive of others are slowly converting people to the joy of bug-eating through sporadic dinner parties in Dennis's Washington Street loft.

The menu items? Mouth-watering treats such as cricket pad thai, mealworm French fries, roasted "bamboo worms" (they're actually

See BUGS on page 11

Recipe of the week...

CRICKET PAD THAI

Serves six

8-10 ounces rice stick noodles
6 tbs. fish sauce
2 tbs. soy sauce
6 tbs. lime juice
4 tsp. organic sugar (Turbinado, etc)
4 tbs. peanut oil
1 cup crickets (see note)
3-4 cloves garlic
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup scallions, finely chopped
2 cups bean sprouts
1/4 cup crushed peanuts
1 lime (cut into wedges to serve to each person)

Combine the fish sauce, soy sauce, lime juice and organic sugar in a bowl and blend well. Pour oil into a wok or skillet, and cook the crickets over medium-high heat. Remove to bowl or plate. Scramble the eggs in the wok or skillet. When stiff, remove eggs to cricket-filled bowl. Add garlic and scallions to wok and fry until soft. Add sauce mixture, crickets and eggs back into the wok or skillet, and warm thoroughly. Cook rice noodles for about 10 minutes in boiling water. Remove and drain noodles, and add to wok or skillet. Add in bean sprouts and toss thoroughly, being careful not to break the noodles. Top with peanuts and garnish with a lime wedge.

A note about preparing crickets

Crickets must only be purchased from reliable sources. Prior to preparing your crickets, place them inside a plastic container or storage bag and keep them in the refrigerator for at least an hour before using them to slow down their metabolism, inducing a state of hypothermia and inhibiting their movement when removed from container. After removing from refrigerator or freezer, boil them with a few pinches of salt for about two minutes to ensure cleanliness.

Here's what's eating Seventh Avenue

Park Slope's commercial strip is getting a new menu of restaurants



There's something going on along Seventh Avenue, where several longtime shops are either being renovated or going out of business — and others are joining the mix.

By Shannon Gels
for The Brooklyn Paper

Seventh Avenue is a commercial strip in flux.

Along Park Slope's main business spine — running from Flatbush Avenue to 15th Street — there are 27 storefronts empty or in transition.

Commercial strips undergo periodic turnovers, but few Slopers have seen the neighborhood's prime

shopping street in such a state of transition in recent years.

Here are some of the changes taking place recently:

• Cohen's Optical opened near Seventh Street in what was formerly a gynecologist's office.

• Big Apple Cleaners has opened between Fourth and Fifth Streets, replacing Knotting Slope, a knitting supply store.

• A new Turkish restaurant called Istanbul has opened in place of the defunct NoNo Kitchen near Seventh Street.

• The Cabinet Shop on the corner of Eighth Street has closed.

• Chickadee Chick, a fast-food-like poultry purveyor, is coming soon near First Street.

• The Laundromat that stood on the corner of Eighth Street for decades is being

renovated and will open as a seafood restaurant this fall.

• Ha Na Bi, the Japanese-Peruvian restaurant at First Street, and the Grecian Corner diner, at Fourth Street, are undergoing renovations. Both claim they will reopen.

• Eleme, an Italian restaurant near Garfield Street that replaced the decades-old Snooky's Pub only last year, has shut. A "For Rent" sign in the window hawks the lo-

cation as suitable for another restaurant.

• Little D Eatery near 15th is gone, and a Mexican restaurant called Fonda, owned by Chef Roberto Santibanez of the Rosa Mexicano restaurants in Manhattan, is moving in.

Seen in total, an empty storefront nowadays is most likely to become a restaurant, though not necessarily a high-end one. This could be because

rents are dropping. Steve Sommers, a real-estate broker in the neighborhood, said that rents over the past few years had been higher than they should have been.

"It was a bubble, but now all the hot air is getting let out," said Sommers.

Lower rents favor restaurants, which could explain why there are at least 60 restaurants between Flatbush Avenue and 15th Street. And more are coming.

John Burke, another Slope real-estate broker, said restaurants are about the only new business applications he receives.

"I have stacks of applications, pizza parlors, and such," said Burke.

Burke said food spaces are going for more than nonfood spaces but are down to \$4,500 a month from \$5,500 a month three years ago.

Some residents aren't pleased by the changes, of

course. "There are a million eye-glass stores, Asian restaurants, and chicken places," said Dolores Phelan, a resident of Park Slope for 25 years. "It has lost the charm it used to have."

Maybe, but Igor Latman, an employee at Video Gallery near Eighth Street, said there is one main conclusion to be drawn about Seventh Avenue: "People like to eat here!" he said.

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- **Manhattan Avenue Health Center**
960 Manhattan Avenue
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Two parks will get a sprucing

Yes, pun intended

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

Two neglected parks in Bay Ridge will finally get the treatment they deserve.

Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) recently broke ground — ceremonially, of course — on restoration projects for the windswept Leif Ericson Park and the overgrown Owls Head Overlook.

At the so-called

"Dust Bowl," which

is near the corner

of Eighth Avenue

and 65th Street in

Leif Ericson Park,

workers will install

synthetic turf, en-

suring that soccer

games on the dingy

dirt patch will no

longer resemble a

scene out of Stein-

beck's "Grapes of

Wrath."

The \$2.8-million

project will bring

artificial turf, as

well as new benches,

fences, landscaping,

drainage, and water

supply to the shabby

playing field.

Gentile is also

behind a \$1.35-million renovation of the run-down Owls

Head Overlook near the corner of Shore Road and 68th Street,

which calls for new benches, lighting, landscaping, drain-

age and water supply in the historic harbor-front vista.

"Making sure our public parks are the best they can be,

even in tough economic times, means we're protecting the

quality of life that local residents deserve and expect," Gen-

tile said in a statement.

Community Board 10 District Manager Josephine Beck-

mann cheered the renovations, even if it means the neigh-

borhood's infamous Dust Bowl will no longer live up to the

name on the Parks Department's signage.

"The Dust Bowl will no longer be a dust bowl — which

is a good thing," she said.



The "dust bowl" in Leif Ericson Park (above) and Owls Head Park (below) in Bay Ridge will both receive renovations.



Ridge fire leaves dozens in heat



Firefighters douse last Thursday's blaze that damaged an apartment building on Third Avenue at 68th Street in Bay Ridge.

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

The terrifying fire that tore through a Bay Ridge apartment building early last Thursday left dozens of residents homeless — and 28 people injured.

More than 160 firefighters responded to an 11:44 p.m. call about the brutal inferno that ripped through the four-story edifice at the corner of Third Avenue and 68th Street, decimating apartments and a ground-floor beauty salon and popular deli.

Firefighters battled the blaze for more than three hours, as residents fled from the flames via stairs and fire escapes. Six civilians and 22 firefighters suffered "minor injuries," according to fire officials.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation, a Fire Department spokesman told The Brooklyn Paper, though early reports suggested the blaze started in the Sunnydale Convenience Store on the first floor.

After the fire, victims sought refuge — from the blaze and from the hot Thursday temperatures — at the Guild for Exceptional Children. Residents of the scorched building are staying at a nearby hotel, or lodging with friends or relative, according to a spokeswoman for Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge).

'Senior' moment on Lefferts Place

Company wants old-folks home — some think six stories is too tall

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

A long-frozen plan to build affordable senior housing on Lefferts Place has come back to life, revealing a rift in the normally quiet corner of Clinton Hill between neighbors divided over the six-story project.

The debate isn't over the need for the building's 71 units — it's over whether the non-profit housing organization hoping to build it should be allowed to exceed the neighborhood's five-story height limit.

By one story. Outspoken opponents condemn CNR Health Care Network's intentions, saying that the extra floor would mar a street intact with many late 19th-century homes and erase a 2007 victory in the City Council to ban taller buildings on the three-block-long street.

"We are against the development because it is a massive nursing and housing com-

plex [that] will dwarf the surrounding brownstones, limestone, rowhouses and villas," said Serge Vatel, a Lefferts Place property owner, in a lengthy letter asking Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Clinton Hill) to oppose the project. "Why are politicians willing to roll over for a healthcare developer and destroy the wonderful community that we have built over decades of hard work?"

The addition of below-market rate housing for the elderly in a somewhat taller-than-permitted building, however, is not an inherent threat to everyone on Lefferts Place.

"There are a lot of seniors in the community, and they need some place nice to live," said Catherine Taylor, the treasurer of the Lefferts Place Civic Association.

Taylor is undecided about the project, but said she'd be opposed to it if it were "outrageously tall."

The question of the senior housing dominated Wednesday night's block association

meeting. Before the meeting, there was talk that Civic Association President Richard Roach was in danger of losing his leadership role because he supports the project against the apparent wishes of the majority of his group. The meeting ended after The Brooklyn Paper's Wednesday night deadline (check BrooklynPaper.com for an update).

James said the developer should have a summit with the residents to resolve the tension.

The controversy about the geriatric homes partly stems from a dearth of details about the project. Vatel's letter suggests that neighbors think that CNR is trying to build as high as eight floors with more than 100 units.

Officials spoke to The Brooklyn Paper to dispel the rumors. Their plans call for 11 parking spaces, a garden area and community rooms.

Everything would have been built prior to

the 2007 neighborhood rezoning if it were not for a legal dispute with their landlord that was only settled earlier this year. Reducing the scope to comply with the new zoning would have cost the company \$9 million in federal housing loans, because CNR says, the Department of Housing and Urban Development doesn't lend to smaller projects.

"We were in a quandary," said Mike Bi-alek, a vice president at Abraham Health Services, a CNR affiliate.

The company chose to press on with the original plans and hopes to convince the upset neighbors that the project is not excessive.

"We certainly don't want to go against the community," he said.

The company has not yet filed a request with the city to get approval for its plans.



Residents are upset about a six-story home on Lefferts Place, but a few blocks away, this new 17-story building on Washington Avenue is going up.

Here's what's eating Park Slope's Seventh Avenue

By Shannon Geis
for The Brooklyn Paper

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Along Park Slope's main business spine — running from Flatbush Avenue to 15th Street — there are 27 storefronts empty or in transition.

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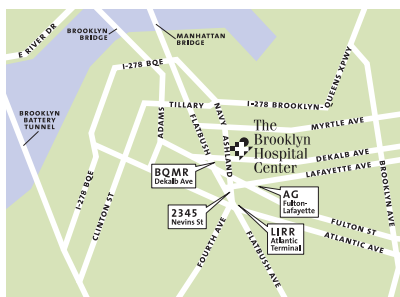
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Neighbors have their fill of wine

Big crowd flocks to CB1 hearing to fight bar plan

By Aaron Short

Community Newspaper Group

A Community Board 1 committee voted on Tuesday night to deny a liquor license for a Metropolitan Avenue wine bar as neighbors complained that booze-soaked, party-loving, "frat boy"-filled Williamsburg just can't handle one more drinking establishment.

"It's nothing personal to the people running this business, but the neighborhood is nearly saturated with bars," Dennis Thompson, a Williamsburg resident, told CB1's public safety committee, which was considering a liquor license request by Custom American Wine Bar. "The area is becoming unlivable. What we need are businesses that serve our community, not a transient community."

But the owners of the wine bar, which is at the corner of Driggs Avenue, said they have 17 years of experience in the food and beverage industry, and said their restaurant would be upscale and feature locally sourced food and alcohol.

Dan Lathroum and Stefan Mailvaganam also said they'd stay open as late as 2 a.m. on some nights.

That anything-but-startling revelation led to an audible gasp among two-dozen residents who stuffed the cramped community board office — prompting committee chair Mieszko Kalita to remind uninformed residents that licensed bars can stay open until 4 a.m. under state law.

Not that Lathroum and Mailvaganam want to run such a late-night haunt, they said.

The crowd won't be "drunken frat boys" who have been disrupting the neighborhood, Lathroum said. "Drunken frat boys don't come to drink an \$11 glass of wine, grab an indigenous bite to eat, and listen to jazz."

But neighbors didn't want to hear it, demanding at first that the bar close at 9 p.m., though later saying that 10 p.m. would be acceptable.

"We are trying to prevent gang activity in the neighborhood," said Luis Santiago, who said he was representing tenants from 232 Metropolitan Ave. "Opening this restaurant with beer and liquor, with teenagers already going crazy here, it's going to be an even bigger issue. I don't think it's a good idea for there to be tables and a cafe out on the sidewalk."

Though seasoned in the restaurant world, Lathroum was still overwhelmed by Tuesday night's dust-up.

"We expected opposition but I didn't expect to be vilified," said Lathroum.

The application will go before the full board on Sept. 9. The full board's vote is only advisory. The State Liquor Authority routinely overrules community boards.

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Marty hears bitter 'Triangle' battle

By Jared Foretek
for The Brooklyn Paper

Opponents of the controversial Broadway Triangle rezoning proposal took their case to Borough President Markowitz on Wednesday, arguing that the proposal to build 1,851 housing units was so compromised by a politically corrupt process that it must be tossed.

The plan, which would rezone 31 acres in East Williamsburg to encourage the construction of 905 below-market-rate units, has been surrounded by controversy since the city gave the development rights in a no-bid contract to the United Jewish Organization and the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council, two groups with deep connections to Brooklyn Democratic Party chair Assemblyman Vito Lopez (D-Williamsburg).

Critics, who drastically outnumbered the plan's proponents at the Borough Hall hearing, argued that while the goal of increased affordable housing was laudable, the process had excluded large parts of Williamsburg's black and Hispanic communities and that the plan itself did not contain enough affordable units.

"It's not about opposing affordable housing," said Juan Ramos, chair of the Broadway Triangle Community Coalition. "It's about the people that love Brooklyn, the people that called this neighborhood home before people wanted to walk on the streets of Williamsburg and Bed-Stuy. It should be an open and clear process."

The plan is "racially, ethnically, and religiously discriminatory," added Marty Needleman, also of the opposition group, because half the apartments would have three or four bedrooms. He claimed that this "clearly exhibits racial and religious bias," because it would cater to large Hasidic families.

The plan's proponents, however, did not sit idly as a silent minority.



By the Brooklyn Paper / Justin Chan

"I have committed a great sin," said U.I.O. President Rabbi David Niederman, tongue firmly planted in cheek. "For four years, we have been working to successfully develop a plan that nobody can dispute."

He touted the plan's affordable housing, saying, "Think to yourself: what are we as a community? What is going to be our answer to the hundreds of families that can't afford homes?"

As Niederman finished his testimony, boos, along with a few cheers, rang out from the audience, but the hearing never got out of hand, as prior hearings had.

Opponents of the plans held signs reading, "Open the process and stop the rezoning!"

If Markowitz had an opinion, he didn't reveal one, asking just one clarifying question and reacting to impassioned testimony with only the occasional nod.

Community Board 1 already approved the rezoning,



By the Brooklyn Paper / Justin Chan

though board members complained of a corrupt process. The Beep has until Thursday, Aug. 13 to submit his recommendation to the City Planning Commission. After that, the city rezoning plan goes to the City Council, where it is expected to be approved. It is supported by the neighborhood's councilman, David Yansky (D-Brooklyn Heights), but opposed by a neighboring lawmaker, Diana Reyna (D-Bushwick), who is fighting it after a falling out with her mentor, Lopez.

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But neighbors didn't want to hear it, demanding at first that the bar close at 9 pm, though later saying that 10 pm would be acceptable.

"We are trying to prevent gang activity in the neighborhood," said Luis Santiago, who said he was representing tenants from 232 Metropolitan Ave. "Opening this restaurant with beer and liquor, with teenagers already going crazy here, it's going to be an even bigger issue. I don't think it's a good idea for there to be tables and a cafe out on the sidewalk."

Though seasoned in the restaurant world, Lathroum was still overwhelmed by Tuesday night's dust-up.

"We expected opposition but I didn't expect to be vilified," said Lathroum.

The application will go before the full board on Sept. 9. The full board's vote is only advisory. The State Liquor Authority routinely overrules community boards.

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

Crime is down in W'burg, G'pnt

But burglaries are still too high

By Aaron Short

Community Newspaper Group

Major crime is way down in Williamsburg and Greenpoint — but break-ins are soaring.

In the 94th Precinct, which covers Williamsburg's north side and Greenpoint, reported robberies are down 23-1/2 percent, felony assaults are down nearly 14 percent, grand larcenies are down almost 11 percent and auto thefts are down 25 percent.

In the neighboring 90th Precinct, which covers Williamsburg and Bushwick, overall crime is down nearly 14 percent this year, with robberies down 30 percent, felony assaults down five percent, grand larcenies down 23 percent and auto thefts down 24-1/2 percent.

Cops credit community involvement and, well, themselves, too.

"Many community members have stepped up to be community leaders, speaking up about these issues," said 90th Precinct Community Affairs officer Juan Roman.

Despite the good news, burglaries are up 19 percent in the 90th Precinct and 18-1/2 percent in the 94th Precinct.

Luis Garden Acosta, founder of El Puente, a community center, offered one theory.

"The dwindling support for young people [turns them] to gangs to foster a sense of security and identity," he said. "Crime stats may be down across the city, but it means nothing to young people who have to fear walking on certain blocks."

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NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

Fire damages Court multiplex

Minor injuries, major terror

By Robert Voris
for The Brooklyn Paper

At long last, it was the right time to yell "Fire" in a crowded movie house as the United Artists multiplex on Court Street was heavily consumed by smoke during a crowded afternoon screening on Tuesday.

Chaos engulfed the movie theater shortly after 2 p.m., as patrons, some covering their mouths, had to find their own way to the smoky lobby as the Bruce Ratner-owned 12-screen theater at State Street in Downtown.

Eight minor injuries, mostly from smoke inhalation, were reported in the fire, which apparently started in the popcorn maker and quickly forced the evacuation of all 11 floors of the building.

Alison Katz and her friend Melissa Garry were watching "The Ugly Truth" in a sixth-floor theater when the fire started.

They said they did not hear the alarm, but learned of the fire when "one of the ushers finally turned on the light, rushed in and told us to get



Police and firefighters evacuate the movie theater on Court and State streets during Tuesday's fire.



out," Katz said.

"But no one was leading us, so we just went down the escalators," she added.

"By the third floor, we could see the smoke," Garry added. "And all the way through the lobby, you could barely see a thing. I didn't even see the fire."

Eight fire units rushed to the scene and brought the blaze under control quickly.

The cinema was open for business almost as usual on Wednesday, with moviegoers flocking to first-run hits, but the main-floor concessions area still bearing the scars of Tuesday's blaze.

One of the two popcorn makers was, indeed, out of commission.

PROSPECT HEIGHTS

Pacific sidewalk now a car lane

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

They're calling it "Ratner Road." Construction near developer Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards project produced an unusual and confusing detour on Pacific Street that has turned one sidewalk into a lane of car traffic.

Drivers and pedestrians will share the sidewalk for 12 weeks while the city installs sewers near the corner of Sixth Avenue, on the edge of Ratner's proposed basketball arena and four-story-scrap development. A five-foot-wide path for walkers is separated from moving traffic by a concrete barrier.

This stretch of Pacific Street at Flatbush Avenue is busy due to its proximity to the Atlantic Center and Atlantic Terminal malls, plus the subway stations at Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street. A reporter from The Brooklyn Paper observed pedestrians confused by where they were supposed to go, thanks to the presence of an unlabeled arrow pointing vaguely towards the truncated sidewalk.

And motorists who were equally baffled and extremely cautious while veering onto the walkway, which Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn called "Ratner Road" on its anti-Atlantic Yards Web site this week.

"That's the first time I've ever driven on the sidewalk," said one driver through his car window.

The idea of driving on the sidewalk may be strange to Brooklynites, but the Department of Transportation said it is



They're literally driving on the sidewalk at the Atlantic Yards demolition site in Prospect Heights, where workers have turned the pedestrian space on the south side of Pacific Street into a lane for cars.

run-of-the-mill in important construction projects.

This kind of arrangement is not unique and has been used on projects such as the Second Avenue Subway (in Manhattan) and on major projects on 34th Street in Queens or Richmond Terrace on Staten Island," said Scott Gastel, a spokesman for the Transportation Department, via e-mail. "We will continue to monitor the area."

Daniel Goldstein of Develop Don't

Destroy, who lives near the corner, disputed that such sidewalk car lanes are as widespread as Gastel suggested.

"I hope I'm wrong, but I've been watching the intersection and makeshift road and sidewalk, and someone is going to get hurt there," he said. "It is a very dangerous situation that the Department of Transportation has apparently approved on Forest City Ratner's behalf."

— with Jacob Kleinman

PARK SLOPE

Gruntled postal workers

Local stations off chopping block

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

So much for the feds going postal on your mail service.

After several weeks of relentless blog and other media coverage of the impending down on Brooklyn post office customers, none of the supposedly endangered postal stations in Park Slope, Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights or Red Hook is on the final list of locations that will

be studied by the United States Postal Service for consolidation or closure.

Park Slope residents were the most pleased by the news, given that the neighborhood's 11217 ZIP code has three retail locations — a main post office on Ninth Street, plus satellite locations on Seventh Avenue and Prospect Park West in Windsor Terrace.

The closest branches to Brownstone Brooklyn that will be studied are the Sunset station at Fifth Avenue and 61st Street in Sunset Park, the Halsey station on MacDonough Street near Broadway in Bedford-Stuyvesant and the High-lawn station on W. Sixth Street near

Quentin Road in Gravesend.

Last week, postal union officials sought to generate public outcry by suggesting that many retail locations across Brooklyn would be closed due to declining revenues of the United States Postal Service, whose debt is the billions due to ongoing competition from e-mail and other forms of instant communication and document delivery.

And on Wednesday, local postal workers union president Jim Musumeci was still sounding the alarm.

"I still think there's a good possibility that [two Park Slope locations] can be closed down," he said. "There are three offices within the ZIP code, and the post office keeps making these decisions pretty much like I change my socks, which is every day."

RED HOOK

Hack job: City raids illegal Ikea cabs

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

What a bunch of hacks!

The city's Taxi and Limousine Commission last Friday raided a cab stand set up by Ikea at its Red Hook superstore, beginning an investigation into the apparently illegal use of the name "Cobble Hill Car Service."

That name has long belonged to a company owned by Vito Balsamo, who learned about the impostor after The Brooklyn Paper wrote about the new cab stand — and after he started receiving complaints from passengers who said the impostor company overcharged them.

"I'm the guy taking all the heat. People are calling me saying, 'We thought you had a reputable company,'" said Balsamo, who opened Cobble Hill Car Service in the 1960s.



CAR AND DRIVER: Vito Balsamo, the owner of the real Cobble Hill Car Service, is angry at Ikea for setting up a limo service with the same name.

"I don't want to be responsible for anything these people [the cab service] might do. I've received 30 complaints," added Balsamo. "One guy said his wife and daughter were charged \$285 to take a bathroom set over the bridge [into Manhattan] in a van."

Then, the TLC moved in. Ironically, Ikea brought in the sham company to restore order to the welter of drivers jockeying for illegal pickups in front of the store this spring, which in one case led to one cabbie attacking another driver with a baseball bat.

A spokesman for the Swedish home-furnishings giant said it was duped by the name-copping company.

"We were under the impression there was some sort of loose affiliation with Cobble Hill Car Service," said Joseph Roth.

Ikea promised that a smooth ride for customers is just around the bend.

"We are investigating that all interaction with customers with this particular representative and car services, in general, are straightforward and accurate," Roth said.

— with Robert Voris

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Classic dog-bites-ma story

88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene-Clinton Hill

A wounded man alleges that a dog owner sliced his pet bull on him in a Myrtle Avenue store on Aug. 2.

The victim, 54, said the canine's jaws snapped shut on his hand at the behest of the beast's master while the victim waited on line to purchase some items at 4:18 am in a store between Adelphi Street and Carlton Avenue.

Win-doh!

A bandit made off like a well, bandit by breaking into a Myrtle Avenue apartment through its window on July 26.

The abode, between Clermont Avenue and Adelphi Street, was empty from 12:30-2:30 pm, when the 24-year-old tenant returned to find the window near the fire escape open. She told police that the intruder stole a laptop, camera, microphone, television and DVD player from her and her roommate.

Punchy

A villain, with three accomplices, jabbed a man in the mouth on Washington Park on July 27 before robbing him.

The pugilist punched the victim, 24, near the corner of DeKalb Avenue at 12:01 am and then stole \$50 and an iPhone from him.

Conked

A ruffian knocked a man unconscious during a mugging on Adelphi Street on July 28.

The victim, 26, said he was hit from behind, knocking him to the ground into unconsciousness from the collision with the pavement between Greene Avenue and Fulton Street at 1:05 am. When he came to, he realized that the thief had stolen his cellphone.

Locked up

Police arrested two teenage girls for mugging a lady on St. James Place on July 28.

The 16- and 18-year-old hooligans took \$15 and a cellphone from the victim, 22, between DeKalb and Lafayette avenues.

Choked up

The chokehold was the mugging move last week.

In one case, a 34-year-old man said that a thief snatched behind him and clamped the choking maneuver on him on Vanderbilt Avenue at around 3:00 am on July 29. The assailant stole \$50 and a cellphone from his gasping victim between Myrtle and Williams avenues.

On Aug. 2, another thief brutally strangled an 18-year-old on Flatbush Avenue. This thief's repertoire also included claiming he possessed a gun. Under duress, the victim withdrew \$480 from two cars at cash machines between Atlantic Avenue and Hanson Place.

—Mike McLaughlin

84TH PRECINCT

Brooklyn Heights-DUMBO

Gym grab

Ah, there's nothing like the lure of the classics. In yet another example of that staple of The Brooklyn Paper crime blotter, a thief grabbed a woman's purse while she worked out at a Boomer Place gym on July 27.

The woman went to the gym, which is between Pacific and Dean streets, at around 5:30 pm, and placed her things in a locker. When she returned after her hour-long workout, she discovered that her purse was gone.

Bus bust

A thief grabbed a woman's wallet on a Downtown bus on July 29.

The victim exited the bus at Borough Hall and noticed that her wallet was missing. She didn't notice anyone bump into her, but she later learned that her credit cards had been used.

POLICE BLOTTER

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Sidekick slip

A thief grabbed a teenager's cellphone on Fulton Street on Aug. 1.

The young lady and her friend were on the pedestrian mall near Hoyt Street at around 7:50 pm when the perp walked past. He then turned around, slipped the T-Mobile Sidekick from the teen's back pocket, and fled.

Drive bye

Thieves took a Volvo sedan from a spot on Wyckoff St on July 28.

A Massachusetts man had parked the car between Smith and Hoyt Streets at 10 am. He came back to discover the car missing at 8:45 pm.

Three days later, thieves swiped a Honda Accord from Nassau Street near Navy Street. The victim, a man, found the car at noon and discovered it missing when he returned 16 hours later.

Diversion

A thief grabbed a strap-hanger's purse while feigning being lost on July 23.

A woman and her boyfriend told cops that the thief only managed to nab the airbag from the car.

Apple a day

Tech-hungry bandits nicked fancy gizmos throughout Prospect Heights this week. Here's a rundown:

A handyman finished his work in a Park Place apartment, between Underhill and Washington avenues, at around 1:45 pm on July 30.

The victim exited the white iPod as a tip.

A dental assistant had her iPhone stolen when she left the office, which is on Vanderbilt Avenue between Dean and Bergen streets, to take a break at around 5 pm on July 29.

Four days earlier, a thief stole the iPhone of a man who was eating lunch at Bob Law's Seafood on Vanderbilt Avenue between St. Marks Avenue and Prospect Place.

—Robert Voris

72ND PRECINCT

Windsor Terrace

Ewww...

A creep crept out a 17th Street woman walking her dog with his slimy behavior on Aug. 3.

The victim was taking her pooch for a stroll between Fifth and Sixth avenues at around 7 am when a man cat-called her. As she passed him, he began stroking himself suggestively, so she fled.

He pursued her for a short time, but couldn't keep up.

Slasher seized!

Police arrested a man armed with a box-cutter to accuse a woman as she moved her couch out of her apartment on 22nd Street on July 24.

The assailant slashed the woman's couch and threatened both her and the mover as they labored between Fifth and Sixth avenues, but thankfully didn't follow through on any of his violent boasts. By the time cops picked him up, he had tossed the box-cutter, but immediately confessed to the sofa assault.

2-wheel thefts

It's bike-theft time again.

A \$750 road bike was stolen on Sixth Avenue near 19th Street overnight on July 24.

The victim said she had locked up the two-wheeler at 9 pm, but it was gone when she returned at 1 pm the next day.

A thief stole a mountain bike valued at \$600 early on Aug. 3. The victim had locked his bike to a fence on 15th Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues at 6:45 am and came back an hour later to find his ride jacked.

—Robert Voris

68TH PRECINCT

Bay Ridge

Terrifying mug

Two armed bandits brutally beat a victim and took his wallet on 12th Avenue on July 24.

The victim was at the corner of 64th Street at 11 pm when two men approached him — one brandishing that most per-

suasive of objects, a pistol.

The other, not to be outdone, wielded a knife and told the man, "Give me your money or I will kill you" in Spanish.

He then beat the victim over the head with the knife.

The victim fled to his car, but the two men caught him, beat him some more and stole his wallet, netting \$30.

4 men, 1 bag

Three hoods snatched a handgun from another man early on July 31 near Leif Erickson Park.

The victim was on 67th Street between Eighth and Ninth avenues at 2:15 am when three men snatched the bag, which held \$170.

Cat burglar

A self-shield sneaked snatched electronics from an Ovington Avenue apartment overnight on July 30.

The victim left his apartment, which is between 13th and 14th avenues at 7:30 pm and returned at 6:05 am the next day to find his apartment and bedroom doors open and his TV, iPhone, computer and monitor gone. The police found no sign of forced entry.

Bad habit

A crook in need of a nicotine fix snatched cartons of smokes from a Rite Aid just past noon on July 26.

The thief broke into the office of the pharmacy, which is on 15th Avenue near 70th Street, took the manager's wallet from her purse and dashed out with an armload of money-emphases-causing death sticks.

Rob me now?

A three-man team of robbers lifted cellular phones from the T-Mobile store on 86th Street on July 17.

The squad of bad guys entered at around 12:15 pm, and started distracting the clerk with inquiries. Meanwhile, his partners pocketed the pilfered phones.

The store, which is between Fourth and Fifth avenues, said it lost \$1,250 in equipment.

—Robert Voris

94TH PRECINCT

Greenpoint-Williamsburg

Battle o' sexes

Three burglars broke into a Diamond Street apartment on July 30, but one wound up in cuffs after a long tussle with the victim.

The perp entered the apartment — which is between Driggs and Nassau avenues — at around 1 pm, but the 39-year-old victim returned home as they were ransacking the apartment.

Two of the burglars fled, but a struggle ensued between the third suspect and the victim. As the two tussled out of the apartment and down the stairs, the suspect dropped his wallet and back pack, and the woman ripped off the 32-year-old suspect's white T-shirt.

The suspect fled, hopping through backyards, but was apprehended near Nassau Avenue and Leonard Street.

His accomplices made off with the woman's jewelry and camera. And they kept their shirts.

Dell-irious

A crook got away with a Greenpoint man's laptop on July 26 — stealing it right out of the man's hand as he left the Bedford Avenue L-train station.

The 22-year-old victim told cops that he was leaving the station, which is at N. Seventh Street, at 11 pm, when the thief, who was wearing a red jacket, pounced and then fled.

Cash for callers

Two nifty thieves tricked a Greenpoint Avenue check-cashing business out of \$95,000 on July 30.

An unknown woman called the manager of Pay-O-Matic — which is between Manhattan Avenue and Leonard Street — at around 4:30 pm, claiming to be the wife of the owner of the company.

The woman knew all the correct passwords and names of supervisors, who then handed over the \$95,000 to a man, said police.

Steals on wheels

A Ducati motorcycle was stolen from the corner of Banker Street and Wythe Avenue on July 27.

The speed-demon thief took the 2006 Italian bike after its 34-year-old owner parked it at 10 pm.

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Carroll Gardens Cobble Hill-Red Hook

76TH PRECINCT

Two thugs snatched a man on Third Street on July 25.

The victim and two friends were walking home from a bar at 2:10 am near the corner of Hoyt Street when the friends snatched behind him and asked the trio to "hold up."

One criminal shoved an unknown object in the 21-year-old victim's back and demanded that he "give it up."

"It" consisted of \$12.

The thieves fled as they saw one of the victim's companions using his cellphone, possibly to call police.

Leatherman

A villain stole a woman's leather bag in a mugging on Kane Street on July 25.

The victim, 30, told police the brute wrapped an arm around her neck and told her not to move, because he allegedly had a gun. He snatched the tanned-hide purse, containing several credit cards, and fled from the scene between Court and Clinton streets at 4:45 am.

Vicious cyclist

A bicycle-riding menace robbed a boy near the corner of Court and Union streets on July 25.

The ruffian sneaked from behind and spun the 12-year-old victim around at 7:30 pm, telling him to "shut up, hurry up and give me your cellphone." He then hopped on his bike and rode away.

Heads up

Two muggers, one wielding a knife, robbed a man on Bush Street on July 25.

The victim, 19, said the duo stopped him between Court and Clinton streets at around 9 pm. One brandished the knife and told him to keep it down. The other shoved him against a metal gate and stole his cellphone and wallet containing \$50.

—Mike McLaughlin

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OUR OPINION

Why we're steamed

Maybe it's the rising temperatures, but we're so angry about so many topics that it's time for our annual summertime catch-all editorial. Consider it a summer salad of things that are driving us mad (who doesn't love a summer salad?).

• **Clinton Hill alarmists:** A proposal to build six stories of seniors housing in Clinton Hill met with ire this week — with one opponent actually saying that the building would “destroy” the community because it violates the city’s height limit. That limit? Five stories.

So one lone story would “destroy” a neighborhood? Given that senior housing is in such short supply, we think Clinton Hill could handle the devastation.

• **Williamsburg testators:** Our North Brooklyn and online editions carry a story this week about a group of Williamsburg residents who stormed a Community Board 1 hearing to protest a liquor license for a wine bar at the corner of Driggs and Metropolitan avenues. Certainly, our first instinct is

Here's what's driving us mad this summer!

to consider the residents’ concerns, but when such concerns are willfully exaggerated by an exaggerated claim of “drunken frat boys” pillaging the neighborhood, our second instinct — to side with two seemingly reasonable men with good track records who want to open a legitimate business — kicks in. The neighbors have a point that Williamsburg has become the city’s boozey playground — but they also need to be reminded that the market will ultimately decide about the new wine bar. If customers don’t like the place, rest assured, it will go out of business. And the “drunken frat boys” will have to find somewhere else to get their \$11 Shiraz.

• **Mary Markowitz:** Brooklyn’s borough president is a beloved figure, possibly the most-liked official in the city. Wherever he goes, he is greeted

with genuine affection — and, believe us, that’s rare for a politician.

Yet with his dream job locked up for a third term, Markowitz revealed some behind-the-scenes pettiness by hiring a high-priced election lawyer to get his lone Democratic challenger — a newcomer that no one has heard of — kicked off the ballot.

Markowitz could have taken the high road, dined the neophyte Eugene Myrick in a token debate or two, and buried his legacy as a likable guy. But he chose politics as usual.

• **Mike Bloomberg:** Does the third-term-seeking mayor think Brooklynites can be fooled by a press release? This week, Bloomberg said if re-elected to the third term that he never should even have been allowed to seek, he’ll get us an express F train, new ferry service and even trolleys.

These are worthy goals. But hasn’t Bloomberg been mayor for nearly eight years? Why are these ideas in a press release and not in his record?

ALL DRAWN OUT



Chris Ware

LETTERS

More complaints about the Meadows of Shame

To the editor,

Thanks for covering the on-going trash problem in Prospect Park (“No Bash, Plenty of Trash,” July 31).

Every summer, our park is transformed into another famous New York City open space: Fresh Kills.

The Parks Department never seems to have the manpower to keep up with the trash — it’s been this way for the 15 years I’ve been visiting the park.

How about getting some help from the Prospect Park Alliance? A few more cleanup crews and equipment could have a big impact.

Adding to the degradation of the park is the condition of the run-

ning and hiking path. The clogged grooves on the running path have trees growing in them! There are huge puddles that runners and bikers have to avoid — so they move into the auto lanes and risk getting killed.

The Prospect Park Alliance has spent a lot of money on long term, big-ticket projects — perhaps they can improve the lives of people who use the park right now.

Peter Levinson, Windsor Terrace

The cure?

Please stop with the lie that American health care “costs more without better outcomes.” (“McMahon talks about health care,” McMahon on Line 1, July 31)

American health care uniformly has better outcomes, and if you subtract morbidity due to car accidents and gunshot wounds, we have the longest life expectancy anywhere in the world. Moreover, American health care is far ahead of every other system in treating most diseases.

Also, it isn’t true that 47 million people are without insurance. The real number is about 10 million. Medicine is not a natural mo-

nopoly. What the United States needs is less government interference, not more in health care. A multi-state insurance market. High-deductible policies. Tax-free health savings accounts. Please don’t let this obscenity of a bill pass.

Steven Rosenberg, Park Slope

• • •

To the editor,

Health care reform is a serious issue in our country. Every day, people who work hard and play by the rules find it increasingly difficult to afford health insurance — especially those that do not receive health benefits from employers.

Costs are rising without improving our health. Our health care system rewards doctors for providing more tests and procedures rather than better care for patients. It’s time for Congress to stop listening to drug and insurance companies and start listening to the people.

Congress must pass comprehensive health reform now!

Jennifer Fals, neighborhood withheld

Animal acts

To the editor,

In response to your article on

the Macy’s fishing contest (“Fantastic! Girl wins fishing contest for first time ever!” July 23), Macy’s routinely sells dead corpses of mink, fox, rabbit and raccoon, so it should come as no surprise that the store sponsors a tournament where young people are encouraged to kill fish.

Thanks to Jared Foretek for mentioning that Quaker Schools are not into the “whole killing fish thing.”

I realize that the tournament is “catch and release,” but many fish that are caught and released still die because of damage to their mouths and internal organs.

The whole point of the animal rights movement from is that animals do not exist to provide humans with entertainment, sport or food.

Wayne Johnson, Brooklyn Heights

• • •

To the editor,

If we look honestly at what life in captivity means to elephants compared to their place in nature, we can see how far we have degraded these magnificent animals (“Ringling round the rosy,” July 31).

Elephants are extremely social animals that lavish affection and attention on their extended fam-

ily members. In the wild, each day is filled with socializing, exploring, playing, and participating in other activities. Their mourning ritual over the death of a family member mirrors our own. Their level of self-awareness continues to amaze scientists worldwide.

In circuses and zoos, their complex and multifaceted emotional relationships are left in tatters. The public’s capitulation to cheap and easy distraction means a lifetime of suffering for the animals.

Jennifer O’Connor, Norfolk, VA

Pol position

To the editor,

I was dismayed to learn that Democratic city council candidate Josh Skaller has hired a right-wing Republican operative to work on his campaign (“Council candidate,” July 17).

Party boss “stole” my petitions. The Politiciansher, July 17).

Your article highlights not only Gerry O’Brien’s conservative politics, but also his questionable campaign tactics. O’Brien not only ran John McCain’s presidential campaign in New York, he also worked for Republican state Senator (and Atlantic Yards cheerleader) Marty Golden.

Skaller claims to be a progressive, reform-minded Democrat, but if this is the company he keeps, I don’t trust him to represent my values in City Hall.

Bradley Kerr, Columbus St. Waterfront Dist.

Flag waver

To the editor,

With this country marching lockstep with President Obama towards Socialism and Communism, someday most Americans will realize that the causes of the South, liberty and states’ rights, were the causes of us all (“Rebel Yell! Ridge man proudly displays Dixie flag,” July 31).

Those half-wits and full idiots who dare compare the Noble Banner of the South with the swastika are beneath contempt. They are among those jack-booted thugs who are with Obama, marching towards a so-called “workers’ paradise” as they used to call the old Soviet Union.

Don’t you people ever remember why it failed?

Jimmy Shirley, Jr., Florida

• • •

To the editor,

Your article’s contention that the Confederate flag has been “a

logo for hate groups” is wrong. Both the Ku Kluxers and the American Nazis make heavy use of the United States flag. Does that not make it “a logo for hate groups” as well?

Rather than maligning “Mike” in Bay Ridge for expressing his views vexillologically, let those who disagree with his views fly whatever flags suit them.

Clifton McLendon, Texas

Thank Bruce

To the editor,

Your article on the Atlantic Yards hearings last week was funny (“Clash of the fightin’s,” July 31).

All these clowns that wanted a much smaller development have finally gotten their wish. Finally, the project is greatly reduced and they’re still complaining and carrying on. Don’t they see how they should just move.

You have to admit that the area looks much better now that Rattner has torn down those ratty decrepit buildings in the area. They were real eyesores. He should get a medal!

Al Pankin, Downtown

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

August 7, 2009

Tranquility base

GO Brooklyn's guide to getting some peace and quiet

By GO Brooklyn's Peace Squad

The Brooklyn Paper

Horns are honking. Jackhammers are hammering. Politicians are calling. Babies are screaming (or worse, wanting you to play with them). Face it: you can't get any freakin' peace and quiet in this town!

Thankfully, we feel your pain, so this week, GO Brooklyn's tranquility-loving team fanned out across this frenetic borough to find those silent enclaves, late-afternoon beers, peaceful sunsets and other hidden oases (nice plural!) where you can get a rare bit of time to recharge.

Here are the calming details:

Still waters

Sunsets aren't only for romance; they're for relaxation — and the best place to watch the rosy fingers of dusk sink away over New Jersey is from Red Hook, with its expansive sky-lapping waters and a 270-degree view from Lower Manhattan to the Narrows (with Lady Liberty thrown in for good measure).

One great spot is the Valentino Pier, jutting out from the end of Coffey Street into the harbor. The pier has the splendid view, but is also a relaxing community gathering place (if you find relaxation in petting other people's dogs, this is your place).

And for all the controversy its opening created last year, IKEA has done the neighborhood a huge favor with its Erie Basin Park, which sits behind the blue-and-yellow Swedish monolith. The park has some mildly interesting sculptures, but the most interesting aspect of Erie Basin is its tranquil sadness: plaques carry testimonials from the dockworkers who once worked the piers, and cranes that used to hoist cargo dot the waterfront promenade, reminding parkgoers of the industrial roots of Red Hook.

Valentino Pier (end of Coffey Street in Red Hook); Erie Basin Park (1 Beard St. at Dwight Street in Red Hook, (718) 246-4532).

Full body

Set in a converted chocolate factory, Body By Brooklyn is a luxe spa with that rarest of relaxation spots: a full bar that'll serve you even if you're barefoot and wearing a robe (would Eamonn Doran do that?).

Of course, you don't come to a spa to drink, you come to spa (yes, it's a verb), so there are all the requisite treatments, including yoga, massages and steam rooms. The Russian sauna offers a dry, 180-degree heat, plus the chance to be hit with oak leaves or rubbed with salt from the Dead Sea. If you're not sufficiently relaxed by that point, get a chocolate full body massage. And if you want the full treatment, reserve a private room for \$200 per hour. The spa provides the Champagne and you can do whatever you want (no



questions asked). Body By Brooklyn (275 Park Ave. at Waverly Avenue in Clinton Hill, (718) 923-9400).

Book smart

You don't hear of people going to the Brooklyn Historical Society — and that's what makes the society's Othmer Library such a great place to escape. Constructed in 1881 and refurbished in 2003, the library houses some 100,000 books about the history of Brooklyn. The hand-carved ash stacks and moiraine are elegant, interesting and historic, just like our borough. True, you need an appointment to look at a manuscript or something from the archives, but casual bibliophiles can browse or read (after paying the building's \$6 admission fee).

Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Pier-report St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111). Open Wed-Fri, 1-5 pm.

Dead quiet

On weekends, Prospect Park is as crowded as a frat party and as filthy as a garbage dump, so why not go hang out in the cemetery? It may sound strange, but the Greenwood Cemetery is relaxing for more than just its long-term residents. In fact, prior to

the Civil War, its rolling grounds attracted 500,000 day-trippers — rivaling the stentorian appeal of Niagara Falls.

But these days crowds are far more sparse, leaving lots of room to amble the 478 hilly acres, where conductor Leonard Bernstein, painter Jean-Michel Basquiat and even graft master "Boss" Tweed enjoy their eternal rest.

Greenwood Cemetery (500 25th St. at Fifth Avenue in Greenwood Heights, (718) 768-7300).

Crawl, don't run

Everyone loves the city's public swimming pools — everyone, that is, except people who like to swim. And there's no shame in admitting that sometimes you wish you could just have the pool to yourself instead of being surrounded by noisy, boisterous kids (damn kids having fun!).

Fortunately, there are early morning and early evening lap swimming hours at both the Red Hook and Sunset Park pools.

It's a great stress reliever. "Once you're underwater, you hear nothing," one swimmer told us the other day. "You think you would think about all of the

things that are stressing you out, but once you're under, you forget about all of that."

Sunset Park Pool (Seventh Avenue at 43rd Street, (718) 965-6578). Red Hook Pool (155 Bay St., between Henry and Hicks streets, (718) 722-3211). Early lap swim, 7-8:30 am; evening lap swim, 7-8:30 pm.

Get bent

It's easy to tell a stressed-out person, "Try yoga." (Try yoga — there, we said it. Yes, it was easy.) But not all yoga is the same. At Bend and Bloom, which just celebrated its one-year anniversary, owner Amy Quinn-Supina prefers a vinyasa-style yoga that leans more towards tai-chi than traditional stretch-and-hold grunts.

"Vinyasa techniques aren't just relaxing in the studio, but because they're not all about stretching, you can use what you learn as you go out into the world," she said.

Of course, Quinn-Supina's studio itself is a comforting place — and not just because the 1920s-era firehouse is painted all white and has such nice high ceilings. If you're short on dough, for example, you can sign up for a work-study program that will have you answering phones or working on the company's Web site in exchange for your classes.

See PEACE on page 9

CINEMA

Kung fun!

A trio of rockers will bring some noise to a silent kung fu film during a rare screening. The Boston-based Devil Music Ensemble will perform a live, original soundtrack for the 1929 martial arts movie "Red Heroine," the only surviving silent martial arts movie from Shanghai's Golden Age.

The live accompaniment at the Aug. 9 screening will create a totally new context for the obscure fighting film by merging classical Chinese music with 1970s kung fu film stylings.

"It's a challenge to try to bring a film to life with music," said Jonah Rapino, who will play a keyboard, electric violin, lap steel guitar, vibraphone, and a two-stringed violin called an erhu — all tuned to traditional Chinese scales.

"People really listen because there is no dialogue, there are no sound effects," he added. That's not to say there isn't a lot of action in "Red Heroine," which tells the story of a female fighter avenging her grandmother's death.

As if that isn't enough for kung fu fans, a troupe of martial artists will perform before the film.

"Red Heroine" with the Devil Music Ensemble, at Automotive HS (50 Bedford Ave. between N. 12th and Lorimer streets in Greenpoint), Aug. 9, 8:30 pm. Tickets, \$9.

— Ben Muessig

BOOKS

Chess mate

Move over, Su Doku! Chess grandmaster Maurice Ashley has a new mind game: pawn mowers.

Ashley — the nation's first black grandmaster — invented pawn mowers, and has now published a book of its puzzles, to teach both beginner and intermediate-level players the basics and strategies of the ancient game of chess.

The set-up features a central piece — a rook, bishop, knight, or queen — surrounded by pawns. The objective is to "mow" down the pawns in a designated number of moves, without moving to an empty spot.

"My target audience is the middle-aged woman who says, 'There's no way you can teach me how to play chess,'" said Ashley, who lives in Park Slope. "Then I show her pawn mowers and she's like, 'Wait a minute, this is easy!'"

When he's not designing brain-teasing chess games, Ashley teaches the strategy of the royal rumble. While he wants the game to be even more prominent, Ashley acknowledges that Brooklyn can hold its own at chess, citing some of Brooklyn's greats like Bobby Fischer, Gata Kamsky (who is currently the top player in the United States), and himself.

"Brooklyn represents chess," he said.

"Pawn Mowers" is available at www.mauriceashleychampions.com.

— Jared Foretek

THEATER

Bear market

It's current! It's humorous! It's educational! It's "Tally Ho! Or Navigating the Future," a slapstick comedy with trap doors, giant puppets, and the economy, stupid.

So, naturally, it's a madcap comedy. The outdoor, free production follows the rise and fall of two account executives through the current fiscal meltdown.

When their once-profitable, but now-toxic, assets become a problem, all hell — we're talking worthless hedge funds, but credit default swaps, and inexplicable derivatives — breaks loose.

Of course there's a 1950s musical number! But it's not all fun and games, said Jon Weber, a spokesman for Theater for the New City, which is producing the show. "We want to make people aware of what's going on and how they can get involved."

Sounds precariously. But the good news is that there are plenty of pie-throwing and sceler-spraying to keep it all fun.

"Tally Ho! Or Navigating the Future" will be performed at the Coney Island Boardwalk at W. 10th Street on Aug. 14, and the Prospect Park Concert Grove (enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue) on Aug. 22. All performances are at 2 pm and are free. Call (212) 254-1109 for info.

— Shannon Gels

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09

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HERE TO GO

EDITORS' PICKS

SATURDAY
August 8



For kicks

Most art openings are the same old boring wine-and-cheese events, but 1158 Gallery's "Sneaker-Themed Art Show" promises to be a step forward for art, for sneakers and for gallery openings. Lace up your freshest pair of Nikes and check out local and international artists' take on sneakers, along with cocktails and music.

6 pm, ANIVRAM's "Sneaker-Themed Art Show" at 1158 Gallery (1158 Dean St. between Nostrand and Rogers avenues in Crown Heights, (888) 333-2851. For info, visit www.1158dean.com/events.

SUNDAY
August 9



Eternal love

True, the fact that Jim Carrey is in a movie isn't exactly a selling point. But "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" is Carrey's diamond in the rough. Plus, large portions of it were filmed in an old Victorian in Greenpoint that later became a crackhouse. See it for free as a part of the Summerscreen program at McCarran Park.

Dusk, "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" at McCarran Park baseball field (center at W. 12th Street and Bedford Avenue in Greenpoint. Free. For info, visit www.summerscreen.org.

TUESDAY
August 11



Quality TV

Prospect Park isn't all trash this summer. TV on the Radio, Brooklyn's own rock-soul-jazz-electronic music band is playing at the band shell as a fundraiser for Celebrate Brooklyn. With hits like "Wolf Like Me" and "Starling at the Sun," the music is sure to be fantastic. And it's for a good cause — next summer's great lineup of free shows.

5:30 pm, TV on the Radio Prospect Park band shell (enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street in Prospect Park). Tickets, \$30.

WEDNESDAY
August 12



Folked up

Finally, the Bard of Bushwick, Frank Hoier, gets his moment in the spotlight. Every Wednesday in August, the maestro behind the weekly "Rhythm and News" feature on BrooklynPaper.com will be hosting the outstanding Roots and Ruckus folk show. Hoier is one of Brooklyn's hottest singer-songwriters — and the show always cooks.

9 pm, Jalopy (315 Columbia St. at Woodluff Street, (718) 395-3214). No cover. For info, visit www.jalopy.biz.

SATURDAY
August 15



We are stardust

Three days of peace, love and music will be condensed down to its essential elements — cheap beer, mood lighting and music — as Water Street Restaurant in DUMBO becomes a shrine to Woodstock to celebrate the concert's 40th anniversary. There'll be an endless loop from "The Woodstock Experience," lots of screaming from Joe Cocker (pictured), plus 1969 prices on beer (16 ounces for \$10).

Noon-midnight, Water Street Restaurant (66 Water St. between Main and Dock streets in DUMBO, (718) 625-9352).

FREE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

FRI. AUG. 7
GENDER EQUALITY FESTIVAL: Entertainment, activities, information, free food and prizes. This year's theme: "Brooklyn, We Go Hard!" Free. 10 am-3 pm, Cuyler Court Park (corner of Greene Avenue and Fulton Street in Fort Greene), www.gencyc.com.

ART, "INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS" OPENING: Featuring photography, video, performance, and new media by Katherine Behar, Ina Edwards, Jeff DeGuerre and Sieben Vestwey. Free. 6 pm, The Hoger Collection (342 Grand St. in Williamsburg, (718) 388-5022, www.hogercollection.com).

FILM, "MR. BLANDINGS BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE": Cary Grant, Myrna Loy, part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (85 seniors and students). 6:50 pm, Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

MUSIC, GRACE POTTER AND THE NOCTURNALS: With Deer Tick and the London Souls. \$3 (suggested). 7 pm, Prospect Park band shell (enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street in Prospect Park), www.brooklyn.org/celebrate.

ART, RED HOOK GROUP SHOW: Free. 7 pm, Jones 414 (414 Van Brunt St. at Coffey Street in Red Hook), www.jones414.com.

ART, LYNN BEAUCHEM'S PHOTOGRAPHS: Free. 7 pm, 1158 Gallery (1158 Dean St. between Nostrand and Rogers avenues in Crown Heights, (888) 333-2851, www.1158dean.com).

BROOKLYN CYCLONES VS. JAMESTOWN: Game is also a fundraiser for the St. John's Bread of Life soup kitchen on the party deck. E-mail stjohnsbreadoflife.org for info. 5:30 pm, Kopsen Park (1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th Street in Coney Island, (718) 449-8497, www.brooklyncyclones.com).

ART, KAKI KING: Free. 7 pm, Littlefield (602 Degraw St. between Gowanus and Fifth avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855-3388, www.littlefieldny.com).

MUSIC, THE FIVE DEADLY VENOMS AND THE HUNTS: American acoustic and blues. \$10, 7:30 pm, Jalopy (315 Columbia St. at Woodluff Street in Greenpoint, (718) 395-3214, www.jalopy.biz).

FIREWORKS: Free. 9:30 pm, Boardwalk Surf Avenue and W. 12th Street in Coney Island, www.coneyisland.org.

Love is a battlefield: Pat Benatar will rock the Seaside Concert Series in Asser Levy Park in Coney Island — on a bill with Blondie! — on Aug. 13.

ING, Free: Noon, Prospect Park Audition Center (enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 287-3400), www.prospectpark.org/audition.

PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, GRAND STREET COMMUNITY BAND: The all-volunteer ensemble playing traditional American marches. Free. 12 pm, McCarran Park (Bedford Avenue at Lorimer Street in Greenpoint), (718) 723-3218).

ARTS CELEBRATION: Art, music, giveaways, food and drink. Free. 1 pm, Fort Greene Park Visitor Center (enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park in Fort Greene, (718) 723-3218).

THEATER, "THE UNCLE BOB SHOW": With Danielle Abrams and Ranae Mirman. \$15 (adults free & 6 pm, FiveMiles (535 St. Johns between Cassin and Franklin avenues in Crown Heights).

ART, SNEAKER-THEMED ART SHOW: With music, cocktails, and surprises. Free. 6 pm, 1158 Gallery (1158 Dean St. between Nostrand and Rogers avenues in Crown Heights, (888) 333-2851, www.1158dean.com).

MUSIC, BIG DADDY KANE: Includes screening of "BOK: The Big Daddy Kane Story." \$3 (suggested). 7 pm, Prospect Park band shell (enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street in Prospect Park), www.brooklyn.org/celebrate.

THEATER, "THE SECOND PIPE OF DESIRE": A staged reading of David Miller's new play. Free. 7 pm, Old Stone House (330 Third St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 768-3195, www.artfulconspirators.org).

MUSIC, MENDELSSOHN AT 200: Free. 8 pm, St. Ann's Church (157 Montague Street at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 702-1411).

SALES AND MARKETS

LEWIS AVENUE FLEA MARKET: Free. 7 am-6 pm, Lewis Avenue and Decatur streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant).

PS 321 FLEA MARKET: Free. 9 am-5 pm, PS 321 schoolyard (Seventh Avenue and First Street in Park Slope), www.parkslopeflea.com.

ARTISTS AND FLEAS IN MCCARRAN PARK: Free. 10 am-6 pm, McCarran Park (Bedford Avenue and Lorimer Street in Williamsburg), www.artistsandfleas.com.

BROOKLYN FLEA: Free. 10 am-5 pm, Bishop Loughlin HS (357 Clermont Ave. at Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene), www.brownsnator.com/brooklynflea.

BROOKLYN FLEA MARKET: Free. 10 am-5 pm, 20th St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Green-wood Heights, (347) 596-7614, www.brooklynflea.com.

YARD SALE: Free. 10 am-3 pm, St. John's Church (99th Street and Fort Hamilton Parkway in Bay Ridge, (718) 745-2371, www.saintjohns834.org).

ARTISTS AND FLEAS: Free. 11 am-6 pm, 129 N. Sixth St. between Bedford Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg, www.artistsandfleas.com.

http://
Find lots more listings online at BrooklynPaper.com/Events

OTHER

SOAP BOX DERBY: Open Source Gallery's Soap Box Derby at the 17th Street Block Party. Free. 1 pm, Open Source Gallery (255 17th St. at Fifth Avenue in Greenwood Heights), www.open-source-gallery.org.

ART, SLIGHTLY IN SEINE EXHIBIT: Four featured artists and over 800 new works at this annual Summer Art Exhibition. Free. 1 pm, Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition (499 Van Brunt St. at Board Street in Red Hook, (718) 596-2506, www.bwac.org).

BROOKLYN CYCLONES VS. JAMESTOWN: Game is also a fundraiser for the St. John's Bread of Life soup kitchen on the party deck. E-mail stjohnsbreadoflife.org for info. 5:30 pm, Kopsen Park (1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th Street in Coney Island, (718) 449-8497, www.brooklyncyclones.com).

FILM, "THE TALK OF THE TOWN": Cary Grant, Jean Arthur. Part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (85 seniors and students). 6:50 pm, Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

ART, LYNN BEAUCHEM'S PHOTOGRAPHS: Free. 7 pm, 1158 Gallery (1158 Dean St. between Nostrand and Rogers avenues in Crown Heights, (888) 333-2851, www.1158dean.com).

COMEDY NIGHT: Leslie Gonick and Jen Kwak perform. \$10. 8 pm, Jalopy (315 Columbia St. at Woodluff Street in Greenpoint, (718) 395-3214, www.jalopy.biz).

SAT. AUG. 8

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

BIKE WIDE: Transportation Alternatives leads a ride from Brooklyn, through Queens and Manhattan and into the Bronx. Free. 8:30 am-noon. Meet at Grand Army Plaza (Under the Soldiers' and Sailors' Arch in Park Slope), www.transalt.org/tourmentstreets.

INTRODUCTION TO BIRDWATCHING

CIVIC CALENDAR

TUES. AUG. 11

Candidate debate. Candidates for the 33rd Council district (currently occupied by David Yasky) will meet. Free. 6:30 pm, St. Francis College (180 Remsen St. between Court and Clinton streets in Brooklyn Heights).

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail Newsroom@bkglobal.com

SUN. AUG. 9

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

COOKING DEMONSTRATION: With Chef Emily Peterson. Free. noon, Park Slope Farmers Market (Fifth Avenue between Third and Fourth streets in Park Slope).

TOUR, GREENWOOD CEMETERY: Historic Fund Walk tour: underground mausoleum of Green-wood. \$15 (\$12 students and seniors). 1 pm, Greenwood Cemetery (Fifth Avenue and 25th Street), (718) 625-9352.

INTRODUCTION TO BIRDWATCHING

CIVIC CALENDAR

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

The Brooklyn Paper
Your Neighborhood — Your News

Online at www.BrooklynPaper.com

The Brooklyn Paper's five zones incorporate the following newspapers:

DOWNTOWN ZONE
Brooklyn Heights Paper, Carroll Gardens-Cobble Hill Paper, Downtown Noon, Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Paper.

FORT GREENE-CLINTON HILL ZONE
Park Slope Paper, Sunset Park Paper, Windsor Terrace Paper.

PARK SLOPE ZONE
Bushwick Paper, Greenpoint Paper, Williamsburg Paper.

NORTH BROOKLYN ZONE
Bay Ridge Paper, Bayside Paper.

RAY RIDGE ZONE
Bay Ridge Paper, Bayside Paper.

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Gowanus music

Porter Block's new album is a collaboration

By Shannon Geis
for The Brooklyn Paper

Only Peter Block would find his inspiration in the murky Gowanus Canal. The fetid corpse of water lends its name — and its rugged good looks — to the new album from Block's (sort-of) self-titled band, Porter Block. But the band's fourth LP, "The Gowanus Yacht Club" isn't about the canal (despite its depiction on the cover) — it's more about the club.

The 11-cut record features a collaboration with a different Brooklyn artist on every track — hence the "club" idea. Some "club" members are well known (like Angela McCluskey from the French pop group Telepopmusik), others not so much.

"Some of the songwriters I knew and had worked with before, others were people that I admired," said Block. "The whole idea gets captured in the song and I hope people hear it."

Brooklynites will be believers. To promote the Fountains of Wayne-influenced record, Porter Block performed all over the borough this summer — including shows at the Northside Festival and Spike Hill in Williamsburg, Bar 4 in Park Slope, and a listening party at the Bushwick Country Club — and Block said the band al-



On the block: Peter Block and his band, Porter Block, have a new album out — inspired by the Gowanus Canal.

ways got a good response from the locals.

"It's more friendly to play in Brooklyn," said Block. "People in Brooklyn really come out to see original music."

There's plenty of it. Most of Block's collaborators have set up shop in the borough, just as he did two years ago at his studio, called the Gowanus Car-

riage House.

When he's not playing or recording, you can sometimes find Peter Block at the Smith Street bar that gives the album its formal title.

"The Yacht Club is just down the street from my studio," he said. "It's a cool place, with burgers, hot dogs and beer." The guy is so in love with

Brooklyn that he even loves his neighborhood subway.

"I love walking from the F train," said Block. "I can hear birds chirping."

Whatever floats your boat. Porter Block's new CD is available at Music Matters (413 Seventh Ave. between 12th and 14th streets in Park Slope, (718) 369-7087).

PEACE...

Continued from page 7

Plus, there's a "pay-what-ever-you-want" every Tuesday at 10 a.m. and an unlimited classes for \$99 deal.

"Yoga," Quinn-Supina said, "is about the union of the mind, the body and the breath, or spirit."

So it shouldn't break the bank. Bend and Bloom Yoga (708 Sackett St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (347) 987-3162).

Wine streak

Down a flight of stairs off bustling Lafayette Avenue, Stonehome Wine Bar is the brainchild of Bill Stenejem, who is (get this) a retired high school alcohol and substance abuse program administrator.

Stenejem, who looks and sounds like an American version of Malcolm McDowell, has put together a wine list of some 200 bottles, with 35 wines available by the glass. The back patio is home to a lush garden, but the undulating cherry-wood bar designed by Stenejem's wife, Rose Hermann, is equally beautiful. Stonehome has expanded its food offerings from cheese and charcuterie to include a \$25 prix-fixe menu (before 7:30 p.m.) and offerings like watermelon and feta salad or sustainably fished Mahi Mahi.

Nothing says "relaxation" like a sustainably harvested fish.

Stonehome Wine Bar (87 Lafayette Ave. at S. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 626-9432).

Drinking life

When you walk into the Brooklyn Inn, inhale deeply,

That smell can't be manufactured in any scent-maker's laboratory — it can only be earned. It's the scent of an old bar. So grab a pint of Brooklyn Lager or Guinness at the 1870s-era wood bar, or shoot some pool in the backroom (these games are definitely low key).

Better still, take your beer into one of the walled-off booths for a quiet afternoon chat.

Brooklyn Inn (138 Bergen St. at Hoyt Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 625-9747).

The art of Zen

If yoga isn't spiritual enough for you, how about sitting and meditating while facing a wall?

That's the soto Zen tradition, as practiced at the Brooklyn Zen Center in Park Slope, where Zen priest Greg Snyder runs the show.

"What we are doing is bringing our minds to our body

and following our breath," he said.

"What tends to cause stress in our lives is that we have an attachment to thought, and the breath is a way to bring the mind away from being attached to those thoughts," he added.

So the goal at regular meditation sessions is to sit still for a half hour at a time, which Snyder admitted isn't so easy for first-timers.

"They're used to following their mind wherever it takes them," he said. "But it is much easier to do it with other people around."

Sounds like that introductory class at 9:30 a.m. on the first Saturday of the month is for you.

Brooklyn Zen Center (389 Ninth St. between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 701-1083). Suggested donation is \$5. For info, visit www.brooklynzen.org.



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AUGUST RECOMMENDATIONS

Darrin's Best Buys for August!

Sipranillo Tempranillo
One of the VERY best under \$15 Spanish wines we've tasted in recent memory! We certainly think so, but you be the judge. Sipranillo hails from Spain's Carinena region located in the northwest province of Aragon. The region's vines receive very little annual rainfall and produce incredibly concentrated fruit which translates into wines of great depth and character. This super juicy 100% Tempranillo, true to the Spanish tradition, is soft and round, with abundant black fruit flavors. Pair it with roasted or grilled meats, pasta dishes, mildly spicy Asian or fusion cuisine, lamb chops, and your favorite aged cheeses.

Almira Los Dos Old Vines Grenache/Syrah
A blend of 85% Garnacha/15% Syrah. Bright cherry red with violet hues with a pleasantly intense complex aroma of subtle fruit and balsam, denoting it's high quality. With a full structure and lingering taste, this wine pairs well with red meats, fish with a cream sauce and various cheeses.

Code Inspiration Viognier
Pale yellow with golden reflections, on the nose you will discover aromas of peach and white flowers. Full in body, dry, clean with mineral notes and crisp green apple. Great for starters, curry chicken, roasted pork and shellfish.

Bauer Gmork Gruner Veltliner
Austrian Gruner Veltliner is very Sauvignon Blanc like, wonderful, brilliant yellow colored wine with a typical Veltliner nose. It has multi-layered fruit, spice, pepper, nut and apple in the bouquet, leading to a fine subtle finish on the palate. Serve with Sushi, Thai food, scallops, asparagus and roasted veal.

Buy Darrin's Best Buys 4 Pack and Save 10% **\$35.82**

Darrin's August Discovery Wines!

La Mondianese Grignolino D'Asti
Made of 100% Grignolino. Located in the hills of Castagnole Monferato and Montemagno ("big hill") in the province of Asti, the La Mondianese farm covers 6 acres with a cellar having the state of the art modern enology. Named for the large percentage of pips, or "grignole," as they are called in the Piedmontese dialect, Grignolino vines yield very few bunches of grapes, but grapes that make an extraordinary wine! Light in color, delicate in style, it demands your attention, rather than hitting you the face with big, blowy aromas and flavors. UNIQUE, delicious and very interesting! That's what makes it our August Discovery Wine! Pair this with any pasta with tomato sauce, pizza, grilled sausage or simply serve with your starters (delish with salami).

Torre del Falasco
This 100% Garganega is sourced from selected vineyards throughout the Valpantana region north of Verona. The Garganega grapes get extra concentration and ripeness from a late, hand-picked harvest. These grapes are de-stemmed and lightly pressed, the must and skins are kept for a short period in temperature controlled tanks. Half of the wine is stored in stainless steel tanks on its lees and the other half is aged in wood to add greater depth and complexity. An intensely aromatic nose, with fruity scents accompanied by light vanilla tones. This late harvest wine is rich and creamy, with a refreshing citrus flavor and a mineral yet soft, complex texture. Long finish of toasted almond. Try with fish dishes, white meats or as an aperitif.

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Flying cirque

What happens when you take Cirque du Soleil and cross it with the "Yellow Submarine"? You get Suspended Cirque's "Urbanopolis," at the Galapagos Art Space.

Dancers hang from chains, fly through the air, and submerge themselves in water, all accompanied by multi-colored lighting and trippy music.

OK, so the plot is ridiculous — a fairy tale featuring a young urbanite who falls into a futuristic labyrinth with a scam-

pering rabbit. But the choreography and visual effect are stunning.

And you can't beat "De La Guarda" action for just \$20.

Five dancers started this troupe a few years ago after working the acrobatic circuit for years — on Broadway, at Above the Belt and the Trapeze School, the works.

They wanted a show that would be sensual, but not burlesque, entertaining but not overdone.

"We don't just do the physicality, we tell a story through it," said Angela Jones, one of the performers.

One of the dances is a four-performer act a fake band leader. As they say on TV, don't try that one at home, kids.

Suspended Cirque's "Urbanopolis" at Galapagos Art Space 16 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 222-8500. Aug. 14-16. Tickets, \$20 (\$10 children and seniors).



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to Labor Day**

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 8
Street in Sunset Park, (212) 639-1090, www.bignation.com.

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "TALLY HO! OR NAVIGATING THE FUTURE": The upcoming musical. Free. 2 pm. Herbert Von King Park (between Marcy and Tompkins avenues in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (212) 254-1109). www.theaterfornewcity.net.

MUSIC, GUY DAVIS: The musician, composer, actor, director, writer, and bluesman. \$20. 8 pm. Jalopy 315 Columbia St. at Woodhull Street in the Columbia Street Waterfront District, (718) 395-3214, www.jalopy.biz.

FILM, "RED HEROINE": The Dead Music Ensemble accompanies the only surviving Chinese silent martial arts film. Live music before the film, open bar at Matchless afterward. Presented by Rooftop Films. \$9. 8:30 pm. Automotive High School (50 Bedford Ave. at Nassau Avenue in Greenpoint, (647) 427-3267). www.rooftopfilms.com.

SALES AND MARKETS
PS 321 FLEA MARKET: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

BROOKLYN FLEA MARKET: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

ARTISTS AND FLEAS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FARMERS MARKET: Free. 11 am-2 pm. J.J. Byrne Park (Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street in Park Slope).

BROOKLYN FLEA: Free. 11 am-4 pm. Under the Brooklyn Bridge (Waterfront District and New Dock Street in DUMBO). www.brooklynflea.com/

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FILM, "STAR WARS": Outdoor movie screening. Free. 8 pm. Heliana Club (257 Fulton St. at S. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 858-9500). www.cocotary.com.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MUSIC, TEENA MARIE, JEFFREY OSBORNE, AND RUBEN STUDDARD: Free. 7:30 pm. Village Field (Brooklyn Ave. between Bedford Road and Winthrop Street in Crown Heights, (718) 222-0600). www.brooklynconcerts.com.

MUSIC, TONY SCHERR: Weekly gig. \$5. 7 pm. Ja-



Money maker: Roki Sugar flaunts the handmade, eco-friendly parties that she'll be selling on Sunday at the Makers Market at the Old American Can Factory on Third Street at Third Avenue in Gowanus.

OUTDOOR ART SHOW AND SALE: Free. 11 am-4 pm. Narrows Botanical Gardens (Shore Road and Bay Ridge Avenue in Bay Ridge, (718) 748-9848). www.narrowsbg.org.

OTHER
ART, SLIGHTLY IN SEINE EXHIBIT: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

PANAMA FOLKLORE SEMINAR: Free. 2 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society (129 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111). www.brooklynhistory.org.

BROOKLYN CYCLOPES VS JAMSTOWN: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FILM, "SUBURBICON": Cary Grant, Joan Fontaine. Part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (\$8 seniors and students). 6:50 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FILM, "STAR WARS": Outdoor movie screening. Free. 8 pm. Heliana Club (257 Fulton St. at S. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 858-9500). www.cocotary.com.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MUSIC, LISA LISA: Remember Cult Jam? Free. 7 pm. Red Hook Park (Verona and Dwight streets in Red Hook, (718) 360-8200). www.chiparkfoundation.org.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Friday, Aug. 7.

WED, AUG. 12
FILM, "ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND": Part of the SummerScreen Film Series. Free. dusk. McCann Park (The ballfields at Lorimer Street and Driggs Avenue in Greenpoint, summergreen.org).

TOUR, GREEN WOOD CEMETERY: Led by Big Onion Walking Tours. \$15 (\$12 students and seniors). 1 pm. Green-Wood Cemetery (Fifth Avenue and 25th Street in Sunset Park, (212) 639-

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MUSIC, TONY SCHERR: Weekly gig. \$5. 7 pm. Ja-

LIST YOUR EVENT...
To let your event in Nine Days in Brooklyn, please give us two weeks notice or more. Send your listing by e-mail: calendar@brooklynpaper.com, or by mail: GO Brooklyn, The Brooklyn Paper, One MenloTech Center North, Suite 1001, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Listings are free and printed on a space available basis. We regret we cannot take listings over the phone.



1090. www.bignation.com.

MUSIC, BONNIE RAITT AND TAJ MAHAL: Benefit concert for Celestine Brooks. \$39.75-\$125.25. 7 pm. Prospect Park band shell (Enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street in Prospect Park, www.brooklynconcerts.com/celebrations).

MUSIC, BLACK MOON AND SMIF N WESSUN: Hip-hop artists who worked with Tupac, Talib Kweli, Mary Blige, and more. 16. Free. 7 pm. Brower Park (Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights, (212) 360-8200). www.chiparkfoundation.org.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Friday, Aug. 7.

READING, LEV GROSSMAN: Author of "The Magicians." Free. 7:30 pm. Barnes & Noble (267 Seventh Avenue at Sixth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-9066).

MUSIC, ROOTS AND RUCKUS: Weekly American folk music variety show. 9 pm. Jalopy 315 Columbia St. at Woodhull Street in the Columbia Street Waterfront District, (718) 395-3214, www.jalopy.biz.

THURS, AUG. 13
1800S-STYLE COOKING: "Garden Noddies." Prepare, cook, and eat over an open fire. Free. 5-7 pm. Wyckoff House Museum (516 Claremont Rd. at Ralph Avenue in East Flatbush, (718) 629-5400). www.wyckoffhouse.org.

MUSIC, GRAND STREET COMMUNITY BAND: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FILM, "BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID": Part of the Movies with a View series. Free. 6 pm. Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park (Plymouth Street at Main Street in DUMBO, (718) 602-0603). www.brooklynbridgepark.org.

TWILIGHT TOUR: Wine and cheese reception, boat tour and naturalized back walk. Reservations required. \$30. 6:30 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 267-3400). www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

FILM, "PENNY SERENADE": Cary Grant, Irene Dunne. Part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (\$8 seniors and students). 6:50 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Friday, Aug. 7.

MUSIC, BLONDE AND PAT BENATAR: With the Donnas. Free. 7:30 pm. Asner Levy-Susskind Park (W. Fifth Street and Surf Avenue, across from the Aquarium in Coney Island, (718) 222-0600). www.brooklynconcerts.com.

READING, LIZ THORPE: Author of "The Secret Chronicles." Free. 7:30 pm. Barnes & Noble (267 Seventh Avenue at Sixth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-9066).

FRI, AUG. 14
GENDER EQUALITY FESTIVAL: See Friday, Aug. 7.

MUSIC, ANIMAL COLLECTIVE: Benefit concert for Celebrate Brooklyn. \$30. 5:30 pm. Prospect Park band shell (Enter park at Prospect Park West and Ninth Street in Prospect Park, www.brooklynconcerts.com/celebrations).

MUSIC, BEAUREGARD REEDY: Free. 6 pm. Medgar Evers College Amphitheater (Mulgonomy St. between Franklin and Bedford avenues in Crown Heights, (718) 270-5053). www.centralbrooklynjazzconsortium.org.

FILM, "THE PHILADELPHIA STORY": Part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (\$8 seniors and students). 6:50

pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

BROOKLYN CYCLOPES VS ONICONTA: 31. \$15. 7 pm. Keyspan Park (1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th Street in Coney Island, (718) 449-8497). www.brooklynconcerts.com.

ART LYNN BEAUCHEMIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS: See Friday, Aug. 7.

THEATER, "TALLY HO! OR NAVIGATING THE FUTURE": The upcoming musical. Free. 8 pm. Coney Island Boardwalk (W. 10th St. at Surf Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (212) 254-1109). www.theaterfornewcity.net.

FILM, "HOME MOVIES": Short films about moments in time. Live music, open bar at Matchless afterward. \$9. 8:30 pm. Automotive HS (50 Bedford Ave. at Nassau Avenue in Greenpoint, (647) 427-3267).

FIREWORKS: See Friday, Aug. 7.

SAT, AUG. 15
OUTDOORS AND TOURS
BIKE RIDE: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

ART, ENVIRONMENTAL MUSEUM ON WHEELS: The nature and maritime Emma. Exhibits, tours, movies, refreshments. Music. International Bar. Free. 11 am. KEA's Eric Bean Park (1 Beards St. at Osego Street in Red Hook, (347) 224-5528). www.urbandivers.org.

INTRODUCTION TO BIRD-WATCHING: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

PERFORMANCE
MUSIC, ANIMAL COLLECTIVE: See Friday, Aug. 14.

THEATER, "WHITMAN'S BROOKLYN": A staged reading of David Miller's new play. Free. 7 pm. Old Stone House (136 Third Street in Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 768-3195). www.tlcooperators.org.

MUSIC, ART LILLARD QUARTET: Free. 8:30 pm. The Lounge (187 Union St. at Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 789-2621). www.thelounge.org.

SALES AND MARKETS
LEWIS AVENUE FLEA MARKET: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

ARTISTS AND FLEAS IN MCCARREN PARK: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

BROOKLYN FLEA: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

BROOKLYN FLEA MARKET: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

ARTISTS AND FLEAS: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

TRUNK SHOW: Species by the Thousands. Meet the designers, see their latest fashions, and enjoy delicious treats. Free. 1-5 pm. Old Hollywood (110 Meserole Ave. between Manhattan Avenue and Leonard Street in Greenpoint, (718) 636-4100). www.dildhollywood.com.

OTHER
URBAN PLANT ART: Sara Bouchard and German artist Leslie Kuo investigate urban plants together. Includes discussion and walks through the neighborhood. Free. Open Source Gallery (255 17th St. at Fifth Avenue in Greenpoint, (718) 254-1109). www.urbanplant-research.org.

ART, SLIGHTLY IN SEINE EXHIBIT: See Saturday, Aug. 8.

BROOKLYN CYCLOPES VS ONICONTA: 31. \$15. 7 pm. Keyspan Park (1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th Street in Coney Island, (718) 449-8497). www.brooklynconcerts.com.

FILM, "TO CATCH A THEIF": Part of the Cary Grant Program. \$11 (\$8 seniors and students). 6:50 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

THIS WEEK ON WATER STREET...

Woodstock 40th Anniversary Reunion Party

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH IN THE UNDERWATER LOUNGE

The Woodstock Documentary! Continuous showings. 8 pm to late night

- Beer at 1969 prices! Draft beer: \$5
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Smartmom is ready to cut the cord

Being a parent is about letting go. From the moment that umbilical cord is cut, it's all about making more and more space between you and your child.

Here's how it goes: breastfeeding gradually ceases to be the main source of sustenance. Then the baby learns to crawl, then walk, then run from you. Preschool and kindergarten takes them further away as they make friends. And those connections only widen and deepen.

And then they go parasailing. It wasn't something Smartmom ever expected. In fact, it wasn't really an activity on her radar at all. It was just a day at the beach on Block Island with the Heptacut, the Oh So Feisty One and her friend, Luvbud.

And then OSFO noticed a tiny yellow parachute with a smiley face on it flying high above and behind a speeding motorboat.

"There's a person attached to that thing," she said.

And so began the longing to be that person flying high above the Atlantic Ocean.



By Louise Crawford

"Can we do that?" OSFO asked with just the slightest amount of pleading in her voice.

Smartmom didn't even answer because she figured the urge would pass and OSFO and Luvbud would soon settle on a safer beach pastime, like collecting seashells or burying each other in the sand.

But the urge didn't pass. And, believe it or not, Heptacut started to egg them on.

"You really want to go?" You want to give it a try?" he goaded.

Smartmom was shocked. Heptacut was usually the hyper-cautious one. From a family of engineers, he knows how everything works and, therefore, just how dangerous everything is. He's the parent who always puts the kibosh on kooky ideas that will result in

emergency room visits or major surgery. The fact that he was encouraging this was irksome — and it made Smartmom mad.

"It's ridiculous," he loudly said, "he told Smartmom. If the string breaks there's the parachute, if the parachute breaks, they just fall into the water."

Smartmom put the whole thing out of her mind as they walked along the beach. She figured it was a remote possibility until she heard Heptacut say,

"Let's walk over to the harbor and see how much it costs."

Smartmom was game only because she figured the cost would be prohibitive.

But Smartmom didn't factor in salesmanship. When they got to the motorboat, he started selling tickets on the dock was determined to get the girls into the boat.

"It's the experience of a lifetime, girls. You'll love it. You can go up together. The captain has been doing this for 20 years. Nothing to worry about. Everyone loves it. We've got a boat leaving in a few minutes."

When Smartmom found out that it cost \$75 per person for a seven-minute ride or a 14-minute tandem ride she was dead set against it. This trip to Block Island was already costing them plenty. Why did they need to add this unnecessary expense?



The Oh So Feisty One and her pal Luvbud get high at Block Island.

But Heptacut felt differently. "This is one of those confidence-building activities," he said. "One of those things that makes you feel like you can do anything. It's great for girls."

Smartmom hardly recognized her ever-cautious husband. But first she wanted to call Luvbud's mom back home in Brooklyn. In a moment of crystal-clear great parenting, Smartmom thought it seemed right that she should call Luvbud's mom for a sign-off on her daughter flying 500 feet in the air. Luvbud's mom gave her OK. The girls cheered.

As the girls got on the boat, the captain said that Smartmom and Heptacut could ride along for free.

Smartmom was pleased. Of course she had no intention of letting her baby fly up in the air without her being on board — free or not free.

By the time OSFO and Luvbud were strapped into the harnesses, Smartmom had a lot of confidence in the captain. A lovely guy licensed by the US Coast Guard, he'd flown more than 40,000 people since 1989.

Smartmom stopped herself

from asking OSFO if she was feeling all right, if she really wanted to go up there, if she wanted to change her mind. She and Luvbud didn't seem to have any reservations. They looked excited and ready to go as they watched the previous tandem couple being lowered down.

Smartmom watched nervously as the girls were slowly released into the air like a kite. Before she knew it, they were soaring high above Block Island's waters.

The view was probably breathtaking for her. For Smartmom, it was anxiety inducing to see her daughter in the sky. She could hardly see her face and kept asking Heptacut how they looked through the viewfinder of his camera.

"Do the look scared? Are they all right?" she asked.

"They're fine," he said. "Can't you see it's making the thumbs-up sign? They're kicking their feet."

I was true. The girls were flailing their arms and swinging their legs like they were on the big girl swings in JJ Byrne Playground in the newly renamed Washington Park. They looked like they didn't have a care in the world.

Big deal. Smartmom was an emotional wreck the entire time they were up there — not that she let on. She made small talk with the captain and his young mate. She asked the previous couple how it felt to be up there.

"It's so quiet. It's so peaceful," the woman said.

On the boat, the captain played Steely Dan songs at high volume and Smartmom felt a blur of feelings that included elation, pride in her brave girl, and even shame. What mother would send her daughter 500 feet in the air?

But then she got hit with something like the world's biggest metaphor. Isn't that rope up to the parasail the umbilical cord that Smartmom has never actually been able to cut? Shouldn't a mother let her child soar (even if it's frightening and stomachache inducing)? If her daughter felt ready to do something new (within reason), shouldn't her mom go along with it and be brave. Isn't that what growing up is about?

Yes, damnit, it's all about letting go.

When the captain's mate started pulling in the string, Smartmom yank her beating heart slow down. As the girls got closer she could see their smiling faces. They didn't look scared; they looked accomplished and happy, especially when the captain let them dip their toes in the water before getting back on the flight deck. They squealed with laughter.

And so did Smartmom, who was happy to have her daughter in her arms as the motorboat speeded back to shore.

It felt like they both had accomplished something important.

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FAMILY CALENDAR



Catch "Life in a Desert Island" in Prospect Park on Aug. 9 and 16.

FRI, AUG. 7
2 pm: Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus: A Ring. One-ring version of the Ringling Brothers show. \$10-\$65. (West 21st Street at the Boardwalk in Coney Island, (201) 507-8900).
www.ringling.com.

2 pm: Animal tales, folklore, games, costumes, crafts, skulls and skins for children aged 4-11. Prospect Park Children's Corner (Flatbush Avenue at Empire Boulevard, (718) 625-7700). www.hearstbrooklyn.org/childrens-corner.
SAT, AUG. 8
10:30 am: Ringling Brothers. See Friday, Aug. 7.
12:30 pm: Puppet show, "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp." \$8 (\$7 children). Puppetworks 1318 Sixth Ave., at Fourth Street in Park Slope. (718) 865-1391. www.puppetworks.org.

1 pm: Nature Crafts. Free. Prospect Park Audubon Center (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 287-3405). www.prospectpark.org/audubon.
1:30 pm: Science Power Spectacular. Free. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Friday, Aug. 7.

2 pm: Story Hour. Free. Imagination Playground (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, www.prospectpark.org).

4 pm: Putumayo Kids in concert. Face painting and food. Part of the Carroll Park Kids Concert Series. Free. Carroll Park (President and Smith Streets in Carroll Gardens). www.carrollpark.org/concerts.

6 pm: Family Camp Out Night. Bring your own sleeping bag. Dinner, dessert, and breakfast provided. RSVP: \$30 per child/parent pair. \$10 for each extra person. Brooklyn Science Project for Educators (53 Prospect Park West Second Street in Park Slope, (212) 920-4483). www.bscw.org.

6:15 pm: "Sesame Street" songs and a Tagger movie. Free. Movie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry Streets in Williamsburg, (718) 923-9710). www.themoosepot.com.

SUN, AUG. 9
12:30 and 2:30 pm: "Aladdin." See Saturday, Aug. 8.
1 pm: Nature Crafts. See Friday, Aug. 7.
1 pm: Nature Crafts. See Saturday, Aug. 8.
1:30 pm: Science Power Spectacular. See Friday, Aug. 7.

To list your event, visit: BrooklynPaper.com/events/submit

FRI, AUG. 14
2 pm: Ringling Brothers. See Friday, Aug. 7.
2 pm: Animal tales. See Friday, Aug. 7.

SAT, AUG. 15
9:30 am: Catch fish, look at them, then let them go. Free. Prospect Park Bridge (1 Main St. at Plymouth Street in DUMBO, (718) 802-0603). www.brooklynbridgepark.org.

10:30 am: Ringling Brothers. See Friday, Aug. 7.
12:30 pm: "Aladdin." See Saturday, Aug. 8.
1 pm: Nature Crafts. See Friday, Aug. 7.
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2 pm: Story Hour. See Saturday, Aug. 8.
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GREEN...
Continued from page 1
and thought, "Our block is literally green compared to this," said Tolando Tolbert, whose house mid-block is the epicenter of Lincoln Road's floral effort.
"But the contest has been great for us because it gets everyone involved," she quickly added. "I feel wonderful. People have been fertilizing the ground with their sweat on this block for decades."
Botanic Garden Director Scot Medbury said block-wide participation was the idea from the start. "It's not the most trellis of Lincoln Road's first-ever win."
"They have 80 percent of the block involved," he said. "And look at these tree pits."
He was pointing to several extra-large sidewalk gardens that neighbors created after realizing that there were no utility wires or pipes running below the sidewalk.
"They got permission from the city, cut through the bureaucracy and got them dug," Medbury said. "That's a lot of effort."
Given that it had been covering the "Greenest Block" contest since some Botanic Garden trees were mere shrubs, it brought up last year's controversy. Medbury played defense.
"We thought Eighth Street

was a credible pick," he tried, gamely.
It was not, of course. Indeed, it should be no surprise that the contest raged between Eighth Avenue and the park didn't even make the top five this year. Contest rules bar it from winning for two straight years, but to not even finish in the top five? Well, that said it all.
I reminded Medbury that I was not the only one who thought last year's decision to call Eighth Street the "greenest block" was a decision that would tarnish the Brooklyn Botanic Garden worse than the High Court was damaged by Bush v. Gore. But he persisted in his misreading of history.
"Well, what we liked about that was that it had a great mix

of owners and renters participating, and we really wanted to acknowledge it," he added. "And it was the first time that a Park Slope block had won."
This year, of course, no controversy. Credibility is restored.
Indeed, other category winners also showed that the Botanic Garden had put the best behind it. The greenest commercial block is Atlantic Avenue between Bond and Nevins streets, while the best garden streetscape is the Hollenback Communion Garden in Fort Greene, where once videotaped myself self-defeating in a water-recycling, solar-powered composting toilet (the video on BrooklynPaper.com, is worth watching).
Hardy Decade of East Flatbush won for best window box — doesn't she always? — and MacDonough Street between Stuyvesant and Lewis avenues in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a block where I have seen myself nursing at the street tree beds, enough won for best street tree beds.

BUGS
Continued from page 1
most pupae, but the less said, the better) with wasabi dipping sauce and, for dessert, chocolate chip cookies.
Reporters from The Brooklyn Paper sampled an abbreviated menu in Dennis's home — abbreviated not because the reporters were repulsed but because Dennis ran out of bugs.
The crickets have similar texture to eating a shrimp still in the shell, though the flavors are not analogous. Crickets have a strong taste that fills the max. The bamboo worms had a slight crunch and potato-like mouthfeel.

These little buggers aren't just hopping with flavor, they're a healthy supplement.
Nutritional content posted on Dennis's Website — www.insect-sareefood.com — says that pound-for-pound, crickets are a much leaner source of protein than beef, which is four times fattier than the chippers. Insects also meet kosher dietary standards (has to do with the way that their legs relate to their bodies — you can look it up — so I fchaim!)
But before you go foraging for the other brown meat in Prospect Park, there are warnings: people who are allergic to shellfish should avoid insects. And no school when I was drunk at party and somebody challenged me to eat them." Dennis chuckled. "I

ate 17 moths at \$1 a pop."
He admitted to eating far dirtier substances — some produced by his own body — on another date in college.
These days, he's the one paying good money to gobble up pests.
The large, one-inch-long and allegedly pesticide-free crickets Dennis purchases from a dealer in Thailand cost 25 cents each. He buys other creepy crawlies from pet stores, much to the amusement of the shopkeepers.
Yet even Dennis has limits. He's made a 180-degree turn from his intoxicated high school years, now refusing to eat live bugs.
"That's just gross — strictly 'Fear Factor' stuff," he said.

BUGGING OUT? Who's eating crickets is uncivilized? Insect-eating advocate Marc Dennis serves up restaurant-style meals (albeit with bugs).

F-TRAIN...
Continued from page 1
MTA completes a major renovation of elevated tracks in Park Slope and Carroll Gardens as early as 2012.
The transit authority's chronic financial woes have squelched many attempts at service improvements in the past, and the mayor's lack of control over the state body is an obvious hurdle, but an MTA spokesman said that the

agency values Bloomberg's advice, though he refused to address any of his specific proposals.
Instituting the changes is one thing, but the mayor clearly latched onto the just-right popular idea in Brownstone Brooklyn where up to 89,430 riders board the frequently thronged and off-schedule train every day, up from 83,500 daily riders

in 2004. (That tally is imperfect, because New York City Transit can't separate riders who hop on the G-train at the stations the two lines share.)
Straphangers said the mayor has the right idea. "It's an absolutely in-favor," said Sylvia Musella, at the Jay Street station on Monday. "It is one of the most crowded trains especially in the morning."
State Sen. Daniel Squadron (D-Carroll Gardens) heard so many complaints from constituents this spring that he requested a full review of the line by the MTA. That report is due this month.
Other proponents of enhanced service think commuters should have lots of time off their trips to work and also have some much-needed breathing room.
"Closer to Downtown, you're talking about a couple of minutes. As you get further out, towards Coney Island you're talking about potentially saving 20 minutes — that's huge. But it's

also about the possible alleviation of Gowanus Expressway. But the venerable planning group shied away from the streetcar proposition.
"It'd probably be unworkable and not cost effective," the scorecard said. "We should not support this."
The East River ferry service also got the thumbs down.
"Tooprimistic, too soon," the group noted. "Who will pay for it?"
— with Shannon Geis

LAKA...

Continued from page 1
news coverage of Laika's theft, the man knew that he had done wrong.
Meanwhile, acting on a tip called into a local news station — which picked up the story after The Brooklyn Paper's intense coverage — Barratt headed to East New York.
Barratt picks up the story there, as reported on her Gone Laika Gone blog:
"Twenty minutes later, we are standing on Atlantic Avenue and Eastern Parkway in the dark. I spoke to a girl with a small dog coming out of the deli.
"We think the dog was taken by a man in a wheelchair," I said.
"Oh yes," she says. "They live right there!" She pointed across the street to a run-down tenement under the bridge on Atlantic."
Barratt hurried over only to find an empty apartment. But one member of her search party suggested calling out the dog's name (which she shes by the way, with the first Russian name).
"I bend down. 'Laika! Laika!' From behind the door, I suddenly hear whimpering, hanging, scratching and snuffling. Incredibly, it really was Laika."
Later in an interview, Barratt said that she and her husband waited for the tenants to come home. When the residents returned, the dog-owners thanked them for taking care of Laika and politely asked for the pet to be returned.
The dog looked healthy, Barratt said, "but looked sad." Still, having the dog back — even under these mysterious circumstances — amounted to a happy ending.
But days earlier, such a conclusion looked unlikely. In the horror that followed the July 24 theft, city workers the case, volunteers fanned out, and Assemblyman Joe Lentol (D-Greenpoint), who loves his dog so much that he has a dog picture of his pup on his desk next to an official office photo of Lentol (which the Pope's ring, starting drafted a bill to make dognapping, catnapping or other pet-stealing its own category of crime).
In the end, the man who confessed to the crime blamed himself alone.
"I am sincerely sorry for my mistake and take full responsibility," he wrote on our Web site about the dog that he had already renamed "Blue Eyes."

Zeke: Cyclones Freak

By Zeke Faux



Cyclone ticket sales are way down this season, even though the first-place team is better than it has been in years.

Good seats still available

Why aren't the Cyclones drawing the crowds?

The Cyclones are in first place. They've got the best rotation in the league and a slugger who saves all his homers for home games. Even the Beach Bums are better than ever. So why are Brooklyn's staying away from Keysan Park?

The Clones are drawing the smallest crowds in their nine-year history, with average attendance down five percent compared to this time last season and 12 percent compared to 2007. The club has beaten its previous low seven times already this season, setting a new record with 4,087 night game on July 14 against Williamsport.

And that's paid attendance — not all season ticket holders show up every night. On some weekdays, the stands have been as deserted as Joe Stitt's Fiasco By The Sea next door. And the lights have been off in many of the luxury boxes more often than before.

Still, Cyclones GM Steve Cohen said the club's revenues "are right where we want them to be" and that the club has actually broken its record for box office take three times this season. Cohen wouldn't give site sales numbers, saying only "the hardest part of sales in this economy is the high end."

The Cyclones' bonho made that last month was tough, with two rainouts, two games interrupted by showers, and one game truncated due to fog.

"We had 19 home games in July combined with some bad weather, which made it hard to pack them in for every game like we'd like to," he said.

But across the Verrazano, where the weather was similarly miserable and 15 dates were scheduled for July, the second-place Staten Island Yankees are on pace to shatter their all-time record, with average attendance up 20 percent from last season.

So what's the problem? Are Mark Cohen's fast-ball and slugger John Servidio's six Keysan homers not enough to bring people to the ballpark? I asked fans at Monday's game — which drew just 6,935 despite the "Straw-bobble" doll giveaway and posts by the knights of the Medieval Times restaurant. What I heard was a lot of different theories.

"Listen, pockets are tight and the food's worse. These chicken fingers are old and cold," said Rob Denner, a security guard from Bay Ridge.

One fan even blamed the Beach Bums' new moves.

"They're not running it for the fans. Do you think the children want to see sexy dancers?" asked Rita Cohen, an advertising agency assistant from Bay Ridge.

Even with the drop, the Clones are still the top draw in the New York-Penn League (the Chesapeake Tigers average just 793 fans per night) — thanks to fans like Eddie Gonzalez of Bensonhurst.

"Maybe people can't make every game, but we still pinch our pennies to come here tonight," said Gonzalez, who brought his father and son to the game. "All three generations. That's what we do."

Zeke Faux is a sports columnist for The Brooklyn Paper. His last name is pronounced "Fox."

The Faux Hole

When the Cyclones beat Batavia, 15-11, on Tuesday, they matched their run total from their previous seven games combined... Outfielder Luis Rivera is heating back up at the plate, batting .428 with a homer over his last nine games... Jake Eigsti, 25, rejoined the Clones for his fourth tour of duty on July 31. At his age, don't expect him to replace Luis Castillo in the Mets infield... As a first-round pick, he has found his stroke — after hitting .288 with seven homers for St. Lucie, he got called up to Birmingham, where he's hitting .295 with eight homers. Outfielder Kirk Newenhuus is hitting .253 with 10 homers for St. Lucie. Shortstop and first-round pick Reese Havens also has 10 homers for St. Lucie, but he's hitting just .238 and has batted injured.

GAME OF THE WEEK

Raspberries for Strawberry

The Renegades played a run in Monday's blowout.

Renegades 7, Cyclones 0

Monday, Aug. 3, at Keysan Park

Starter Mark Cohen (6-2, 2.64) was effective enough, yielding four runs on just three hits in his six-plus innings. He gave up a run in the first after an error by returning Cyclone Jake Eigsti. He settled down after the sixth, when he gave up another run on a solo shot.

But he didn't even get an out in the seventh, yielding two walks in a row. Reliever Erik Turgeon then gave up two singles and both inherited runs scored.

The lanky pen gave up two more in the ninth.

The Cyclones managed just five hits on the night, but had an amazing number of chances.

The team got runners on first and second with no outs in the first, but Justin Garber foolishly tried to steal third and was thrown out.

And in the third, Garber and Eigsti led off with singles, but Eigsti was thrown out trying to reach second on a passed ball.

TIME of the STORM

The world's best Cyclones coverage

The Straw still stirs

Fans and Clones go nuts for Darryl

By Zeke Faux

Even the Princess swooned for the Straw.

Met legend Darryl Strawberry came to Keysan Park on Monday for a "Straw-bobble" giveaway and Medieval Times night, and everyone from the king on down went wild.

The 6-foot-6 slugger with the sweet swing (but the self-destructive off-field tendencies) took the mound with a royal trumpet fanfare and tossed a ceremonial first strike to reliever Mike Lynn. Then Strawberry, who led the Amazon's to a World Series championship in 1986, signed baseballs and Mets jerseys for the fans mobbing the Clones' dugout.

"It's always fun to get over here. I love the Brooklyn fans," said Strawberry in an exclusive, wide-ranging interview with The Brooklyn Paper.

The Straw even signed for the rightful rulers of Lyndhurst, N.J., what ventured forth from the family castle to promote their jousting — "I winches theme restaurant," Nicky Strawberry whispered. "That's Darryl Strawberry" to manager Pedro Lopez.

"He is truly king," said Princess Leonor, clutching her anachronistic souvenir.



Fans at Keysan on Monday night could pick up a Darryl Strawberry bobblehead or greet the man in the flesh.

Lopez, playing it cool. Giarraputo scoffed.

But the manager does know Strawberry — the two played against each other during the star's brief stint in the Puerto Rican winter league in 1995.

"Yeah, I know him," said Lopez, playing it cool.

"I was in awe," the Cyclones couldn't believe it either.

As Strawberry emerged from the clubhouse, Nicky Giarraputo whispered, "That's Darryl Strawberry" to manager Pedro Lopez.

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U.S. News: Maimonides is the 'Best'

Maimonides Medical Center

US News & World Report has ranked Maimonides Medical Center among the nation's Top 50 Hospitals for Respiratory Disorders, according to its 2009-10 publication of "America's Best Hospitals." Only 174 medical centers nationwide made the prestigious rankings in one or more categories.

"When the stakes are high, you want the best care you can get for someone close to you," said Avery Comaru, Health Rankings Editor at US News & World Report. "These are hospitals that are used to getting the sickest patients."

"We are pleased to receive this recognition from US News & World Report," said Maimonides President & CEO Pamela S. Brier. "This reflects on the dedication and expertise of our doctors and nurses, and is wonderful news for the patients and families we serve."

The Respiratory Disorders category includes the diagnosis and treatment of many common conditions and illnesses like asthma and pneumonia, as well as complex health conditions like Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Patients with these diagnoses may require medical treatments and surgical interventions. Some require respiratory therapy and/or ventilators, and many need to spend time in the Intensive Care Unit where physician intensivists coordinate their care.

The methodology for the US News & World Report rankings includes scoring in multiple categories, such as Mortality Index, Nurse Staffing, Key Technologies, Patient Services, Volume, Patient Safety and Reputation. The Reputation score for Respiratory Disorders is based on a nationwide physician survey of Pulmonologists; all other scores are based on review of hard data.

The mortality rate at Maimonides is among the lowest in the nation for Respiratory Disorders, and its nurse staffing ratio is comparable to that of other institutions featured in "America's Best Hospitals."

According to US News & World Report, the highest level of diagnosis and treatment for Respiratory Disorders requires certain Key Technologies: diagnostic radiology services, image-guided radiation therapy, multi-spiral CT, PET/CT scanner, electrostatic radiotherapy and transplants. Maimonides Medical Center provides all of these services except transplants.

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